



SOCIAL CHANGE
ASSISTANCE TRUST

RURAL VOICE:
**WOMEN
IN LEADERSHIP**
Volume IV





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RURAL VOICE: WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

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4th row (left to right): Desiree Brandt, Sizeka Mavumengwana, Keneilwe Petrus, Wasiela Douries, Sibongasonke Daca, Juanita Engelbrecht, Sinothando Mnyazi, Zisande Sibande.



RURAL VOICE:

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

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WE SALUTE OUR WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE AMAZING PROTAGONISTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Joanne Harding, Director of SCAT, explains the rationale behind empowering rural women leaders.

Since SCAT's inception in 1984 the organisation has been committed to gender equality and promoting the status of women in South Africa. Most of the directors of SCAT have been black women and most often the staff complement has been dominated by women. SCAT has progressive, gender-sensitive human resources and funding policies. This commitment to gender equality has translated into encouraging and supporting women in leadership in the local development agencies (LDAs) SCAT supports. Women in rural areas are marginalised in the development process, yet they play a critical social, economic and nurturing role. They have limited access to opportunities to develop, both in terms of skills and personal growth. For this reason, SCAT has always had as a requirement for LDAs attending workshops that at least 50% of the attendees are women.

Women in Leadership (WiL) was not the first effort to develop women leaders, however it was the first of its kind requiring the women to commit to a one-year process. The COVID pandemic highlighted the plight of women whose lives had been further impacted by the lack of freedom of movement, the inability to participate in the local economy, limiting their ability to ensure food on the table for their families, and the escalation of gender-based violence (GBV). Towards the end of 2020 we secured funding for WiL predicated on the assumption that the pandemic would be coming to an end and that the restrictions that limited coming together in person would be lifted.

Having realised this would not be the case, we developed an online course in consultation with A to Z Consulting, who had trained all the staff in online facilitation during 2020. Module One was presented online and focused on leadership styles and elements of leadership. The women were very patient as they struggled with connectivity, despite SCAT providing data for each participant. The localities of the LDAs we support is exacerbated by fluctuating power issues meaning that extra effort had to be made to ensure all could learn the content of the first module.



In order to compensate for the loss of in-person connection we decided to offer life coaching for the women. Many were cynical, having never heard of life coaching, but on reflection said the life coaching was one of the most valuable elements of the programme and ensured that what was learned in theory could be put into practice with the guidance of experts. At our final gala dinner, the participants reflected that they had never had a skilled person spend dedicated time to discuss obstacles and possible opportunities as well as provide guidance on how to deal with past and present traumas.

Module Two, which focused on leadership skills, was a resounding success. The calibre of women SCAT works with in rural areas was evident and their dedication to learning and growth impressive. Working in the development space requires that we take care of ourselves, so we dedicated Module Three to Wellness. Bernice Roeland and Mandisa Mbalingsoti facilitated a process that was both rejuvenating and healing. They demonstrated how wellness is not only about self-care, but also about being connected to and caring for the environment we live in.

Finally, we came together with Heather Robertson, who facilitated a story writing process. This culminated in this publication of the leadership journeys of the women who have participated in the WiL Fellowship. Each story is as unique as the women, who come from three provinces across the country.

This was a pilot process that will be the foundation of future WiL programmes. We are grateful to SCAT's funders who supported this first Fellowship, in particular the Dutch Embassy, Irish Embassy, Ford Foundation, Mott Foundation and Raith Foundation.

SCAT salutes these impressive women who have demonstrated that they are leaders, change agents and strategic protagonists of development. We look forward to hearing more about their journeys and the next chapters in their lives.





THE MAGIC OF FINDING YOUR VOICE

SCAT Programme Officer and joint coordinator of the year-long Women in Leadership Fellowship, Katleho Ramafalo, reflects on her key takeaways from the project.

Too often, women are inclined to lead from the back and operate in the shadows. Their efforts often go unnoticed, while their male counterparts are celebrated and promoted. Modesty and humility are virtues society instils in women that are often used to delegitimise their personhood.

The Women in Leadership Fellowship (WiL) (2021-2022) was a space created to legitimise and celebrate women leaders from rural and peri-urban spaces in South Africa. These women are often the first defenders of gender-based violence (GBV) survivors and protectors of those who are most vulnerable in their communities. WiL became a space where they told their stories, shared in community, and were affirmed. They were not required to shift or change; they were met where they were. WiL was an opportunity for them to hone their leadership styles in an authentic, context-specific way.

The intersection between womanhood and leadership has disheartening consequences for women in marginalised communities. They are asked to choose between their own wellbeing and that of others.

One of the components of WiL was a wellness retreat where the women leaders were exposed to theories and practices of wellness that are accessible to them and can be shared with their communities. Holistic Wellness Practitioners, Bernice Roeland and Mandisa Mbaligontsi, facilitated a week-long workshop that cultivated conversations around how the women leaders can use the tools they have in abundance around them to care for themselves. They were taught about the health and soothing benefits of indigenous herbs and plants that grow freely in their communities. They were reminded of the restorative possibilities of moving their bodies. I recall an instance when the women had a few minutes to settle before the next session began. They began to sing and spontaneously each stood up and shared spoken word poetry or rapped along to a melody that resonated in the space. The confidence to stand up in front of your peers and share an art form that is so deeply personal affirmed to me that some of the learnings and experiences offered by WiL were landing and having a positive impact on their leadership journeys.

The women leaders' artistic self-expression was the magic that bonded us together and held us when frustrations and challenges came about. I am aware that WiL cannot resolve all the complex challenges they face in their day-to-day lives, but I am encouraged by their commitment to learning and unlearning in a playful and self-affirming way.





CREATING A SECOND TIER OF WOMEN LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

SCAT Programme Officer, Vuyo Msizi, reflects on the lessons learned while being one of the coordinators of the Women in Leadership Fellowship Programme.

The Women in Leadership programme gave us an opportunity to discover the strength of our diverse facilitators in SCAT. Working with different stakeholders in the process of co-creating content made us aware of the dynamics of managing strategic collaborative partnerships.

Women leaders who participated in the Women in Leadership programme were given opportunities to participate in different projects of the local development agencies. At Entlango, participants were directly involved in the hydroponic food security project. Now they are involved in the implementation of gender-based violence activities in their community.

Allowing a young, vibrant woman to lead the implementation of the Women in Leadership programme kept us true to our vision of allowing women to take charge, define their future and make decisions.

Many women leaders were not so keen to participate in WiL when it started as an online learning programme, but they developed more interest after we shifted from online to in-person workshops. We also discovered that many women in the LDAs were not happy with the age restriction of 35 years.

Our greatest wish for this programme was for it to help create a second layer of women leaders in the local development agencies. I think recruiting participants from volunteers and staff of the LDA is a more sustainable option because the participants can come back and play a role in the LDA.

The inclusion of wellness as a topic was a wise decision because this had an impact on the lives of the facilitators and the participants. The wellness workshop empowered participants with tools to deal with emotions and life-related stress. It also created space for the participants to create their own unique wellness plans that can guide them in their journey. The coaches were able to create a link between their process and topics that were covered in all WiL modules. Feedback from the coaches assisted us to adjust and monitor implementation of the project.





I CAME OUT OF A DARK HOLE THAT WAS HOLDING ME BACK

Chandré Hendriks was shy and afraid that others would judge her. Through the SCAT Women in Leadership course, she found her voice and self-confidence.

I am 30 years old and this is the story of my life in a small town called Nelspoort, which is about 57 km from Beaufort West in the Karoo.

My grandmother raised me from birth. When I was sixteen, I left my home and family for the first time to do Grade 10. I had to learn to stand on my own feet.

I finished Grade 12, but did not study further because I could not afford it. So, I took a gap year and rested for six months. In 2011 I started working as a community teacher to help mothers who had children at home who did not attend school. It was through this that I started to learn more about my community. People started to talk to me and trust me.

In 2016 my grandmother passed away. This was a big shock. My grandmother was the best thing in my life. My mother and father were not always there for me, but my grandmother always supported me. When I learned I was pregnant in 2012, she was very angry, but she was also happy for me and was there to help with my baby. After her death, I become more mature and independent. This is what my grandmother imprinted in my life: she taught me that every tough moment is the best moment because through overcoming difficulties, I become stronger.



In 2017 I started working as an intern admin clerk at our local hospital. This was my first real job and I was very excited to work there even though it was only for four months.

After my internship, I started my journey at the Nelspoort Advice and Development Office. It was a big challenge. Even though I had worked in the community, I was still shy and scared. I worried about what the people would say about me. It was a lot of work that I did not know, but I believed in myself and was ready to learn. Claudia, my office coordinator, played a big role in my development. She can be very bossy sometimes, but she taught me a lot and I trust her. There were people from the community who didn't trust that I could do the work, but I proved them wrong and earned their trust through workshops and activities.

"She taught me that every tough moment is the best moment because through overcoming difficulties, I become stronger."

I decided to do the SCAT Women in Leadership training because when I was in high school there were leaders in our community who stood up for the youth and helped us. They advised us how to apply for college or work, but now there is no one helping the youth; it is just everyone for themselves. I want to be there for young people when they need me.

I am really grateful to Claudia and the Advice Office for encouraging me to do this training. I came out of a dark hole that was holding me back. Now I have found myself. I am still shy and quiet, but I learned to speak with confidence for the first time and to be myself with people who don't judge me.



EK IS DIE EIENAAR VAN MY LEWE

My naam is Desiree Brandt. Ek is gebore op 3 Februarie 1987 en is 'n boorling van Kakamas.

My ouers en grootouers het swaar gelewe onder apartheid. Hulle was verwyder uit Riemvasmaak. Met die uitsettings het my ouma se agtien kinders op verskillende trokke beland. Sy het met drie na Korrigas verhuis, my ma en nog drie was Welkom toe en die ander na Namibie. So was hulle opgedeel en het geen kontak met mekaar gehad nie. Na die ANC regering oornat kon ons in 1997 terugkeer maar ons lewens was nog in gevaar. Riemvasmaak was intussen 'n weermag kamp en daar was nog bomme onder die grond. Dit was moeilik, daar was geen winkels en geen brug om oor die rivier te gaan dorp toe nie. Ons ouers moes riet bote bou om oor die rivier te kom. Ons het by Augrabies skool bygewoon maar ek moes vroeg die skool verlaat om my ouers te help werk. Werk was skaars so ek het begin saamgaan koringland toe om koring uit te rol. Ek het geleer van veldkos soos marogo en waterblommetjies want ek moes dit pluk sodat my ma daarvan kon kos maak.

Op 18-jarige ouderdom het ek Kakamas verlaat vir Kaapstad en begin werk in die huis van 'n muslim gesin. Woensdae was vuillis dag en dit was my werk om die vuilis uit te vat. Ek het dan die kos en die klere wat bedoel was vir die vullisblik maar nog bruikbaar was buite gesit vir die behoeftiges. En so het ek mense begin help. Ek het die straatmense begin leer ken en sal nooit hulle name vergeet nie. Met labarrang dan het ek altyd my mense gevra om 'n pot kos te maak om met hulle te deel.

Voor ek Kakamas verlaat het, het ek 'n baie slegte ding oorgekom. Ek was verkrag in 2002 deur vyf jong manne. Hulle ouers was welbekend as mense wat besighede, geld en aansien gehad het. 'n Getuie, Shirley, het op ons afgekom, en toe hulle haar gewaar het hulle weg gehardloop. Die jong mans was dieselfde aand nog gearrester. To my ouers hospitaal toe kom en hoor wie





die beskuldigdes was, wou hulle my nie glo nie. My ma was beste vriende met een van die beskuldigdes se ma en sy sê my toe ek praat nonsens en dat dit nie hy was nie, "Sê die regte manne wat jou verkrag het". Dit was vir my verskriklik swaar. Ek het nie ondersteuning gehad nie. Mense het aangedring dat ek lieg oor die identiteit van die beskuldigdes tenspyte van die feit dat die DNA toetse positief was. In die strate het die kinders my gespot dat ek verkrag was. In die kerk het familie en vriende my vermy want ek was beskou as 'n leuenaar. Die hofsaak het begin en my ouers het verseg om my te ondersteun. Die getuie Shirley kon ook nie met my assosieer nie want sy was bang dat mense ook met haar lelik sou wees. Ek was baie seer en het probeer om selfmoord te pleeg.

In die Kaap het my lewe oor begin en my lewe het nuwe betekenis gekry. Ek het veral straatmense begin help met onder andere, om aansoek te doen vir hulle IDs, om werk te kry, hulle moed ingespraak, met kos en klere gehelp waar ek kon en wanneer dit green het, om skooling te kry.

Uitendelik het ek terug gekeer na die platteland en aangesluit by Witzenberg Rural Development Centre (WRDC). Ek woon toe eendag 'n werkswinkel van WRDC by waar hulle oor geslagsgeweld (GBV) praat. Die maatskaplike werkers van Saartjie Baartman het ons aangemoedig om ons stories te vertel. Ek vertel toe my storie en na dit het die ander vroue begin opstaan en ook hulle stories vertel. Ek het begin veldwerk doen saam WRDC en baie mense gehelp. Verlede jaar is ek gekies as 'n Women in Leadership Fellow. Ek sê toe vir myself, "Wow, goeie geleentheid" want SCAT is daar om te help en te ondersteun. Ek het veral van WiL Fase 3 geleer van welstand en dat 'n mens soms moet nee sê sodat jy na jouself kan kyk en so beter na jou gemeenskap kan omsien. Ek het geleer ek wil die tipe leier wees wat kan instap waar daar hawelose mense is, waar daar 'n verkrachtingsaak is en wat moeilike dinge saam met mense kan deurwerk.

Met Mandela Dag was my uitdaging van WRDC om in Worcester tussen die straatmense te gaan slaap. Dit was 'n ondervinding en baie moeilik om onder daai bokse aan die slaap te raak want enigiets kon gebeur het, maar ek het dit deur die nag gemaak.

Ek wil daai leier wees wat mense bystaan waar hulle ook al is, op straat of onderdak.



I AM THE OWNER OF MY LIFE

Desiree Brandt did not let a lack of support from her parents hold her back. Instead she devoted her life to supporting others.

I am originally from Kakamas. I was raised by two parents and had four sisters and two brothers. My parents suffered during the Apartheid years. They faced terrible consequences due to being evicted from their land in Riemvasmaak when they were children. They told us how the trucks were lined up to take them away. My grandfather was shot in his leg.

My grandparents had 18 children of their own. Not all of their 18 children made it onto the truck onto which my grandmother was thrown. Three children went with her to Korrigas. My mom and three other children went to Welkom, and the rest went to Namibia. This is how they were separated and they had no contact with each other. My mother knew her mother's name to be Tryn Brandt and her father's name to be Jan Brandt.

"I want to be that leader who faces difficult situations, no matter the condition of where you live, or how you live, or where you sleep."

When the ANC came to power in 1994 and people were finally able to return to their land in 1997, my parents' lives were still in danger, as Riemvasmaak was an army camp in the Apartheid years and there were still bombs buried in the ground. Life was difficult, with no shops and no bridge across the river to access the town in Kommagas. Our parents had to build reed boats to cross the river. From Riemvasmaak we went to school in Augrabies, but my schooling was cut short as I had to start working to help my parents make a living. There was no income because there was no work, so I had to learn to roll wheat where they were working in the wheatfields. I collected "veldkos", like marogo (wild spinach) and waterblommetjies so that my mother could make food.

I was raped in 2000 by five young men who were from well-known and well-off families in Kakamas. When the case began in court my parents were not there to support me and the whole community did not believe me, even though there was DNA evidence. Shirley was my witness, but she did not want that to be known in the community as they would lash out at her too. I was shattered and tried to hang myself once. I also tried to overdose with pills trying to cope with the trauma and the lack of support.

I left Kakamas at the age of 18 to start a new life in Cape Town, where I worked in the kitchen of a Muslim family.



When it stormed I would fetch the homeless people off the streets. People said my house would become infested with bed bugs from the homeless, but I didn't pay attention to that. I was there to help people. I helped them apply for their IDs, and went to Home Affairs with them.

I went back to the countryside and joined Witzenburg Rural Development Centre (WRDC). One day I attended a WRDC workshop where they spoke about gender-based violence. I told my story and how what happened to me did not stop me from living. I began to do fieldwork with WRDC and helped many people.

I was very excited to be chosen to participate in the Women in Leadership training. In Phase 3 I learned how to care about myself while caring for my community. That was a "wow" for me.

I want to be a leader who is there for people, who can go to where the homeless are, who can help where there is a rape case. Some people want to be called leaders, but they can't face these difficult things. On Mandela Day I went to Worcester to spend the night on the streets with the homeless people. That was a challenge from WRDC. That night I tried but couldn't fall asleep under the boxes, as I was afraid of what could happen to me. But I wanted that experience of sleeping on the streets.

I want to be that leader who faces difficult situations, no matter the condition of where you live, or how you live, or where you sleep.





FINDING PEACE AND PERSPECTIVE

Ebenice Groenewald learned how to balance her emotional, physical and spiritual life, but most importantly, how to trust herself through the WiL training.

A few years ago, a traumatic event gave me the opportunity to sit back and reflect on my life. I had a breast cancer scare at the age of 26 and had to face the possibility of a mastectomy. Luckily, my tests came back showing the growths were benign. I wanted to find out what I must do with my life. It seemed that there was so much emphasis in the world on money, position, and power. All that I ever wanted to do in life was to be around people and to be of help. I initially trained as a nurse, but I realised I did not necessarily want to work with people who were physically wounded, but wounded in unseen ways - emotionally, socially.

I did this one-year course in biblical counselling which really helped me to define my purpose a little more. I worked with CUM - Christelike Uitgewegings Maatskappy - in Pretoria at the time and had all these people come into the bookshop asking for recommendations. They would say, "I'm going through this thing and I need advice or a book to read to carry me through this time." This is when I realised I have a passion to work with people, specifically women. I wanted to work proactively to support people instead of waiting for people to come into the bookshop.

My husband's work brought me back to the Northern Cape. Our marriage went through a difficult time. I was unable to get pregnant and had to put up with a lot of hurtful comments from others. We started from scratch in Postmasburg. This is where, after 11 years of marriage, I finally got pregnant, and it felt like my own personal miracle. My son was born in January 2020, just

before COVID shut the world down. Months later, I gained a second son who is six now. He was formally adopted in June 2022, when my next-door neighbour passed away. I feel doubly blessed. The part-time post with Flourish, where I get to support pregnant women to give their babies the best start in life, feels like it was made for me.

I heard about the Women in Leadership Programme last year from Colleen Alexander-Julies, the SCAT Programmes Officer. We, the Tsantsabane organisations, enrolled late and got onboarded in early 2022. It felt a bit challenging initially, but the minute I opened my Phase 1 activity book, I fell in love with the content. The exercises made me reflect how I was managing things in my community and organisation. I met many people online, and I started to connect with them, even with the hosts, Colleen and Vuyo Msizi. I enjoyed how the course was presented online.

"I also realised that when you have the right information you can make informed decisions about your next steps."

Then Phase 2 gave me the opportunity to come to Cape Town for the first time in my life. It was also the first time I flew. So, there were a series of first-time experiences because of WiL! I was so excited and felt blessed. It felt like I was given a second chance with my marriage and now a second chance with exploring my life purpose. I met women from other provinces in South Africa and made a wonderful friend. We connected as we had a lot in common. I looked forward to each Phase of WiL. Phase 3, the Wellness phase, gave me a new perspective on my work and life. The body mapping exercise was one of my highlights. I learned the importance of taking care of myself emotionally, physically and spiritually. I stopped taking things so personally and could put other people's opinions in perspective without taking it on me. I used to overthink things and stay awake nights because I was so stressed about situations.

I also learned to focus on one thing at a time, instead of tackling five things and doing them halfway. Belinda was my coach. I could share a lot with her and that helped me to cope with difficult situations. I learned to stand in my own knowledge and authority and to trust myself. I also realised that when you have the right information, you can make informed decisions about your next steps. Things fell into place without needing to follow a herd mentality and I learned to be at peace with my decisions.



GO BIG OR GO HOME

Gwendolene Majola considered killing herself when she found out she was pregnant in high school, but through involvement in community work she regained her confidence and sense of purpose.

It all started when I was in Standard Ten.

He was as tall as a giraffe and his voice as rough as a hedgehog's back. He came close to me and asked what I wanted to be after matric. I felt very scared, but I had to show respect because he was the principal of the school. I answered in a small shaky voice, "I want to be a social worker, Sir." Little did I know that he had dirty thoughts about me.

He smiled and asked if he could help me apply to one of the top universities in South Africa because I was one of his best learners. He continued trying to earn my trust, knowing very well what his intentions were. I grew very close to him, and one day he told me that he wanted me to be his girlfriend. I stood there, very shocked, confused, and scared because I saw him as a parent, a teacher and my mentor; someone who always had my back. I never imagined my life would change in the blink of an eye.

My whole world fell apart when I found out that I was pregnant. I was thinking about my mother, who put every cent she had into making sure that I had everything I wanted in life, including the best education.

I thought of killing myself, but then I thought that would kill my family. When the principal found out that I was pregnant, he wanted to chase me out of the school. He said that I was going to set a bad example for other learners. I knew that he was settling a score because I rejected him. I saw my dreams shattering in front of me.

I was very fortunate that there were still a few people who had faith in me. My isiXhosa teacher came to my



house and told me that I need not worry because he would make sure that I finished my matric with flying colours. His words gave me hope. The teachers and learners fought for me and I was allowed to return to school. It was late in the year and I did not have much time to study, but I worked hard. I finally wrote my matric and passed with exemption. I had to put aside my dream of going to university because I needed to raise my baby. Luckily, I had the support of my mother, who is loving and caring. She said having a baby was not the end of the world and encouraged me to work extra hard and fight for what I want.

Because I was no longer going to university, I became involved in community work. I was the secretary of the street committee, advocating for those who could not fight for their rights. It was here that I learned a lot about leadership. Before the street committee, the only leadership experience I had were the roles I played during my high school years, like being a prefect and captain of the netball team.

I joined Rape Crisis and was trained to handle and give counselling to victims of rape and domestic violence. We were stationed at the police station and would take turns to volunteer overnight on weekends. While I was doing voluntary work, I worked at a furniture shop for a couple of years until I saved enough to further my studies.

I decided to apply to the Nelson Mandela University. While studying there for four years I joined the Student Representative Council and was the chairperson of a debating team. After finishing my degree, I volunteered for a year as an administrator at Masiphakameni Paralegal Office. While I volunteered at Masiphakameni, I was offered work as an intern in Human Resources at the Department of Education. My duties included, but were not limited to, retirements and all the people who were exiting the department, leave capturing and leave management. That is where I met my supervisor, Mardie Kilian. She taught me all I needed to know as a Human Resources Intern. She motivated me and always told me to never doubt myself because I could do anything I put my mind to. She always teased me and said, "Go big, or go home." Because it was an internship, the job ended after four years.

I tried looking for other jobs, with no luck. Then I went back to volunteering at Masiphakameni Paralegal Office, assisting wherever I could. Because I was not getting any remuneration, I decided to register my own catering company. I am a strong and hard-working woman and I think this is what drew the coordinator's attention to me. She introduced me to the SCAT Women in Leadership Fellowship Programme. By that time, I had started a small farming project, rearing goats, pigs and cattle.

It was a life-changing experience when I was chosen to join the Women in Leadership programme. The facilitators and coaches taught me to be self-aware, resilient; to know my leadership style and how to lead with purpose. The programme has inspired me to become an empathetic, humble leader who will never go back on my word. A leader who treats people equally, who advocates for people's rights, and changes people's lives for the better.





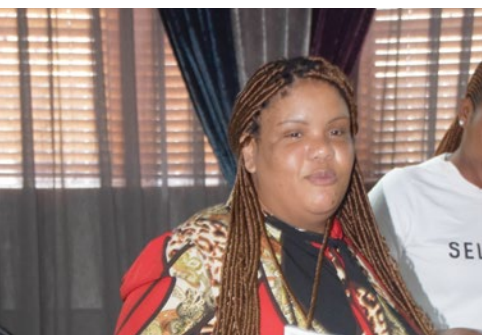
IT'S TIME FOR WOMEN LEADERS TO SHINE

Juanita Engelbrecht is passionate about breaking gender discrimination and empowering rural women to become leaders in the community.

Bang! Bang! It is the police knocking on the door. They have come to arrest my dad. I stand frozen, with my heart beating in my throat, despite the fact that this has happened many times before. My dad stands proud, without fear, a freedom fighter.

I was born in a small town called Klapmuts in the winelands of the Western Cape. We are referred to as farm dwellers, drunkards and disadvantaged. Men always occupied leadership positions. The culture was one that affirmed that men could do everything better. Even women believed this and would vote for the men. I could not accept this norm and invited women to our organisation, Ubuntu Rural Women and Youth Movement. We held workshops with women to improve their confidence and knowledge. It made a big difference and helped women in my community to change their mindset.

My mom was the Chairperson of Ubuntu and she used to invite me to their workshops. It was those workshops that sparked my interest. Women were empowered and rural women were given a voice. I used to be shy to speak in front of others, but learned valuable life skills. I was encouraged by our SCAT programme officer, Colleen, to apply for the WiL Fellowship. The WiL programme has greatly enhanced the leadership potential that I already had. I discovered my leadership style and am now able to understand myself, my community and how to bring about transformation.



I now know that taking care of your wellness is the key to showing up for others. My communication skills have definitely improved and, most importantly, I have learned how to resolve conflict because I did struggle with it. What struck me was when one facilitator mentioned that sometimes you need to put your Godliness aside and handle conflict for what it is. I wish I had done this course at the beginning of my journey. I would recommend it to every woman leader.

"My dream is to be a leader who collaborates with my team so that we can grow together. Most importantly, I want to be an ethical leader because this is what is most needed in this day and age."

I am proud of being the daughter of a freedom fighter. Now it is my turn to walk in my father's footsteps; to lead. My dream is to be a leader who collaborates with my team so that we can grow together. Most importantly, I want to be an ethical leader because this is what is most needed in this day and age. I have much to learn, but also much to give.

Forward we go!

Forward with resilience!

Forward makhosikazi! (women)





I WRITE AND DIRECT MY OWN STORY

Junate Lottering writes about how she managed to take charge of her life, learn from her mistakes, and serve her community.

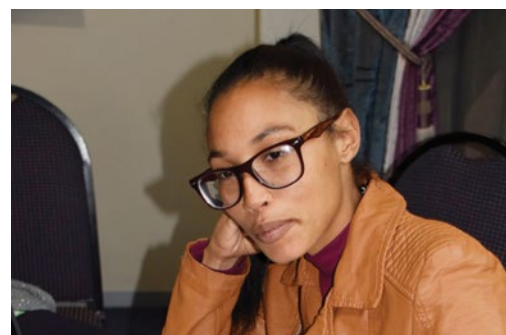
I was born on 25 September 1999. My mother raised me, as my dad started serving time in jail the year I was born. To support us, my mother went to find work in Cape Town. This meant my eldest sister and I had to go live with my grandma and grandpa. We went to Sunday school and to the children's service on Wednesdays. We didn't truly understand what was happening and the dire reality of our circumstances, but we were loved.

The year I turned 12, my mother received her own house [from the state] and my sister and I could live with her again. We were three girls then, as my youngest sister was born in 2007.

Here, in number 5 Main Street, is where I became a teenager and had my very first period. I was clueless and didn't know what was happening to me. My baby sister called my mother. My mother burst out in tears, hugged me, and told me I was a young lady now. Yes, we had freedom fighters and activists, but my role model was always my mother. She didn't just sit back and accept her lot in life; she took action and was mother and father to all of us.

Young girls should get to know themselves and question what they are being taught at home. In my case, my mother taught me that my opinion matters and that I do not need to feel inferior.

In 2015 I started Grade 10 at Swartberg High School and met my dad for the first time. I remember his deep voice and that he wore a long-sleeved red shirt and blue denim pants. He asked me, "Do you love me?" I couldn't answer him, as his question confused me. How can you love someone you don't know? Not having a father shaped me to be a strong girl. I was a prefect in both primary and high school, where I learned about leadership.



I completed matric in 2017 and in 2018 left for Beaufort West to attend South Cape College. I registered for a three-year course in Office Management but ended up only attending the first six months. My mother didn't have much money, but she tried to help. Mid-year through my course my health took a turn for the worse, with all the symptoms of tuberculosis. I was coughing, lost weight, had breathing difficulties and night sweats. I had to leave college to focus on getting well. For six months I had to eat well and take my medication. This time at home led me to reflect on my options, where I was headed and if this was to be my lot. My mother couldn't pay my college tuition and I had to think of ways to help myself and my family.

Beginning 2019 I started working as a class assistant to Mr Fillies at George Fredericks Primary, our local primary school. It wasn't a regular job, but it was something. You can't know how hard life is for an unemployed young person with a father in jail and a mother working for R70 a day in the kitchen of a white woman.

Through it all, my mother motivated me to not give up, no matter how hard things were. In March 2019 someone from the Merweville Advice and Development Office (MADO) approached me to find out if I was interested in working there. It was my breakthrough moment. It wasn't going to college, but it meant so much.

Jan Bostander, Chairperson at MADO, often said, "You learn by working, that's the best way." I was grateful for the work and grateful that I could do something about my circumstances. Up to now I have been the administrator at MADO. MADO is a beacon of hope to the community. Here I also learned to not just think of myself, but to put the needs of my community first.

Through MADO I got to know SCAT and that led me to the privilege of attending the Women in Leadership Fellowship. I learned about women leaders, mental health and how to approach your leadership. Now I can talk when I see injustice and motivate where I see there is no hope.

So, I, Junate Viemess Lottering, daughter of Petronella Fielies, keep learning through my mistakes, but I keep doing what I can and I write and direct my own story.





MOGALA O O FETOTSENG BOTSHELO JWAME

Ka letsatsi leo ke tsogile ka moya o edileng, ke le mafolofolo. Ke nale tshepo ka botshelo. Ka ura ya bo lesome ka amogela mogala on tswang ko Thuso Advice Office, ba ntaletsa go kopana le bona ka lona letsatsi leo (05 September 2021)

Ka tswa ka ya teng ba nkamogetse ka kamogelo e bothitho. Ba nnela setilo bare ke dule re kgone go tswela ka seo ba se mpileditseng. Se se nkgakgamaditseng ke gore fa re tswetse ka puisano ya rona, fa Motsamaisi le Mothusi wa gagwe ba ntse ba tswetse ka go ntlhalosetsa ka phatla-tiro e ba naleng yone mo kantorong.

Mo sebakeng se se sa fediseng pelo ke fa go tsena lekgarebe le le katogileng monyo, ale mosetlhana ka mmala. A dumedisa a dula fatshe. Se ke se lemogileng ke gore Mothusi wa Motsamaisi a tsenwa ke tsebetsebe, a simolola go tswa a tsena ka kantoro. Morago ga sebakanyana a tsena a dula fatshe. Puisano ya fetoga ga nna le thefosano e seng monate ya mafoko. Lebaka ele gore lekgarebe le le tllileng le biditswe fela jaaka Nna. Go tseile nako e telele go fitlhelela tharabololo ya seo. Lekgarebe la re tlela ka se se re isitseng ko tumalanong ya gore ba tseye Nna(Keneilwe) go dira le bone.

Ka letsatsi le le latelang ka tsenela (interview) ka e falola. Ka simolola go dira teng jaaka (field worker). Fa nako e ntse e tsamaya ga tlhaga molaetsa o tswang ko SCAT ba tlhoka motho o ka tsenelang (Women in Leadership) WiL ba tlhoka Nna go e tsenela.

Ke ne ke sena le tlhaloganyo gope ya gore mogala ole o ke arabileng ka letsatsi lele la 05 Phukwi 2021 le ka



mpitlhisana mo ditorong tse nkileng ka di lora ke sale yo mmoatlana. Dia tla jaaka eketse ke toro e ipoletsana ka gopola gore nkile kare ke eletsana go ipona ka palame sefofane, ke tshwere lekwalo la go kgweetsana, le la go itse ka Computer. Ditoro di fetogile nnete. Se ke lebogang ngwaga wa 2022 ka sone ke gore ditoro tse tharo di ile tsa fetoga nnete.

WiL e ile ya dira gore ke nne motho yo o fetogileng thata. Ke ile ka kopana le Mokatisi (couch) e e ileng ya fetola maikutlo aka a gore ke motho yo o sa fitlheleleng sepe mo botshelong, tsotlhe tseo nkileng ka eletsana go di dira ga dia atlega. Go nnile le nako e nkileng ka tseelwa madi kere ke dira lekwalo la go kgweetsana ka feleletsana kele motswasetlhabelo wa gore beng ba sekolo sa go kgweetsana ba tshabe ka madi a rona, seo se ile sa nkuhlwisa botlhoko thata lebaka ele gore se phirimisitse toro yaka ya go nna lepodisi.

Maikutlo ao a kutlobotlhoko a ile a dula mo pelong yaka go tloga ka 2002 fitlha 2022 ka nako e ke e bolelelang mokatisi ka lona A mpontsha ka moo botshelo e leng kgwetlo ka teng bo batla motho yo o sebetse yo o sa weleng ruri. Ka etsatsi leo le 'keledi e ile ya rotha mo matlhong aka.

Ka sebaka se se khutsane ka bona fa seo ke ntse ke se beeile mo pelong yaka se nnileng sekgoreletsi sa tswelelopele ya botshelo jwame. Tshimologo ya dilo tse dintle ya itira tsala yaka. Go ile ga tshwarwa ditlhopho-tlaleletso ko sekolo-potlano sa Kgono ka feleletsana kele Motlatsa-modulasetilo wa SGB.

Boitumelo le bogatlamela masisi ya simolola go nna selo-poelo mo go Nna, ka tlhopiwa gape ko kerekeng go tsaya setilo sa bo katisi jwa setlhopa sa mmimo. Seo ke leng motlotlo ka sona ke gore thuto yotlhe e ke e ithutileng mo WiL e nnile seikokotlelo same mo go kgoneng dikgwetlo tsotlhe tsa leoto.

Tsotlhe tse, ke di kgonne ka thotloetso ya ba lelapa, Molekane le bana ba Modimo a ntshegofaditseng ka bona Ele ruri Modimo o phala baloi.



A CALL THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Keneilwe Petrus reflects on how much her life has improved since attending the SCAT WiL course.

On the 5 September 2021 I woke up in high spirits. At 10 o'clock I received a call from Thuso Advice Office, inviting me to meet with them for an interview.

I was interviewed the following day. I did very well and immediately began working as a field worker.

"I met a coach who transformed me from always feeling like a person who struggles to achieve anything to someone who aspires to succeed."

Some days later SCAT informed us that they were looking for participants for the Women in Leadership (WiL) programme. I was nominated to participate. It occurred to me that the call I received helped me achieve my dreams.

In one of my dreams, I saw myself flying in an aeroplane, having a driver's licence and computer training certification. I couldn't believe it, but all these dreams came true. WiL has developed me into a different person. I met a coach who transformed me from always feeling like a person who struggles to achieve anything to someone who aspires to succeed.

I remember a time when I was scammed by a driver's licence school. They ran away with our money. That broke my heart because it killed my dream of becoming a police officer. I have been heartbroken from 2002 till 2022. When I spoke to my coach about the experience, she showed me that life needs someone who is brave and motivated. On that day tears streamed from my eyes.

I suddenly realised that holding on to that experience is not helping me. From that realisation good things began to be part of my life. I was elected to serve in a school governing body. I was bold, content and at peace. I became a choir leader at church, which I am proud of. Everything I have learned at WiL has been the pillar I needed to walk in spaces where my feet cannot take me.

I managed to achieve all of this because of my family, my husband and the kids that God has blessed me with. Indeed, God is more powerful than witchcraft.





Lettie Booysen



Nonceba Ndala



Thlolohelo Tloti



Desiree Brandt



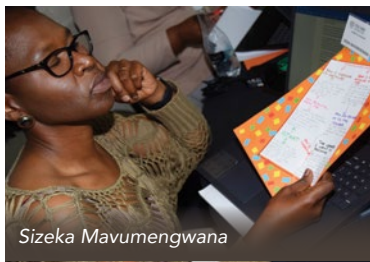
Kate Mabye, SCAT Programme Officer



Sinothando Mnyazi



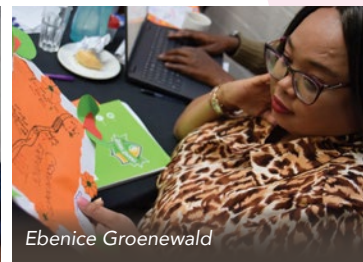
Sharoleen Morris



Sizeka Mavumengwana



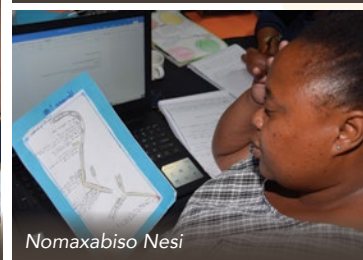
Rosey Beukes



Ebenice Groenewald



Phumeza Sibengile



Nomaxabiso Nesi



Athenkosi Nsethe



Marilyn Hael



Ziyanda Ntsoko



Samantha Van Den Heever



Juanita Engelbrecht



Patricia Sebelego

Creative Mapping: Participants show the maps they created of their leadership journeys which helped them structure their stories



LEADERSHIP LEARNING HAS TURNED ON THE LIGHTS IN ME

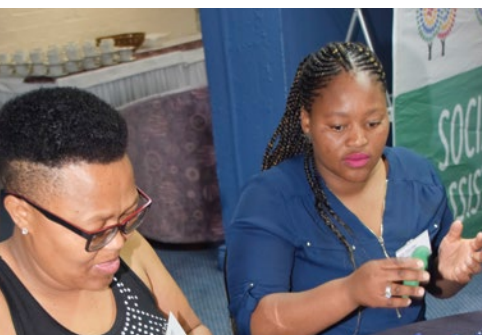
Lettie Boysen thought she was a failure, but she managed to overcome her self-doubt with the support of her mother, her manager at the KSDF LDA, and the SCAT Women in Leadership course.

By the third month when I did not get my period, I was scared that something had happened to me. I went to the clinic and had some tests, and it turned out that I was pregnant. I was so disappointed in myself. I felt ashamed, like I was a failure. I didn't know how to tell my parents. I was only in Grade 11.

When I eventually told my parents, they were shocked. They looked disappointed, but my mother sat with me and talked. She told me it was not the end of the world; she would support me and she assured me that everything would be fine.

In August 2016 I applied for my learner's licence and I was so excited when I heard I was one of 10 learners who passed. In November 2016 I was so proud of myself to pass my Code 10 driver's licence. In 2017 I started a job as a general worker. I was not earning much, but I was happy with the little I got. It helped me take good care of my children.

August is a very blessed month for me. In August 2019 I started my second job as a Home-Based Carer (HBC) at the KSDF, the Local Development Association that I'm with now. I work as a field worker, caring for patients. I love my work with my whole life at KSDF.



During the COVID pandemic, my manager told me about a training opportunity. She encouraged me to take the course. I was nervous and scared because the training was going to be online and I knew nothing about computers, but the facilitators encouraged me that everything would be fine. I just had to trust in myself because they were there to assist me. The session was so good for my self-development and I started to understand what is needed to be a good leader.

I really want to thank the women who were there supporting me through my hard times. People like my mother, Jeannette (my manager at KSDF) and my lovely coach, Mrs Tshidi. They always told me if you want to be a success in life you have to work hard, trust in yourself and never, ever underestimate yourself.

"If you want to be a success in life you have to work hard, trust in yourself and never, ever underestimate yourself."

Because of all this support, I believe that I can be a good example to others in my workplace, community and at home. I will be a good leader because I believe in myself and I live to serve my community.

Attending the leadership training course has brought a lot of light in me because before this course there were times that I felt like I was losing hope and belief in myself.

May the Lord Almighty bless the SCAT staff for developing our future. Keep on doing the good work.

THANK YOU, SCAT!!!





PLEASE CALL ME KANNIEDOOD

Marilyn Hael hated her childhood name because she thought it meant she was slow and nearly dead, but her recent discovery of her resilience and determination as a leader in her community has led her to love and own her name.

I will never forget when my friend approached me. "It's in Pretoria," she said, "just come along, I'm driving on Sunday. I have already talked to the matron. Everything is sorted out." Maria babbled on excitedly, but my head was a jumble of thoughts.

It's not where I wanted to be, or what I wanted to become, but her enthusiasm persuaded me, and a picture began to form in my mind. "Why not?" I thought. "Surely I can't lose a thing?" Then suddenly it struck me like lightning, "You cannot do anything right. Remember your name, *Kanniedood*." This was my childhood name. I hated it. For the family, this meant I was slow and already dead; I just needed to be buried. I couldn't do anything right. I was very clumsy, and sometimes fell over my own feet. "Maybe I can prove them wrong," I thought.

I really wanted to go, but first I had to get past my father. Would he let me? I knew how he felt about cities. "In the city you'll disappear and never ever be found again," were his words always. Well, with Papa's "blessings", *Kanniedood* left for Pretoria to become a nurse and got married.

I started working immediately while studying. I was a quiet, withdrawn young woman who struggled to start or keep up conversations; a woman who thought before she spoke, in fear of saying something wrong. Pretoria, the Jacaranda City, turned out to be a wonderful place. I wanted to stay there forever, but then fate struck not one but two blows.



Papa had an accident and died. My mother-in-law passed away a month later. My father-in-law was old and lived alone. We would have to move back to the countryside, to Postmasburg, a small mining town, about 170 km east of Upington in the Northern Cape. We would have to get used to shops that close at 5 o'clock in the afternoon and one "government hospital", as my parents called it in those years; the nearest private hospital was 80 km away.

"Little did I know that this was the beginning of my journey as a leader."

With heavy hearts, we packed and moved, but little did we know that this was the beginning of great things. Being a nurse was never my dream. I did enjoy it, but the longing for something else was always there. A social worker, that's what I always wanted to be. I started distance learning and worked as a nurse 80 km away from home. My husband had to raise the kids: I was a "remote control" mom. What an injustice to my children! I found a job closer to home and things got better.

Then that headline hit Postmasburg: **BABY'S BODY FOUND ON A RUBBISH DUMP!** The little voice inside me, which never left after all those years, woke up. "When are you starting?" But then again, the thought of *Kanniedood*. "You won't be able to, and even if you start, what happens next?" Little did I know that this was the beginning of my journey as a leader. Life directed me to two ladies who had the same hesitation, desire and love as me. Right there Tsantsabane Centre of Hope was born - a place for broken children.

I graduated as a social worker and worked locally. Tsantsabane Centre of Hope started in a small backyard space at my house. The support of my husband and children carried



us through. I worked day and night, drawing up business plans, doing research, and sending emails for funding.

"Unfortunately..." read the first feedback. A setback. A year passed and still no funds. Volunteers come and go, but some no longer see a chance to work without compensation. Only Chrizette stayed. With her own needs as well, Chrizette continued without compensation. I remembered the words: "Work with what you have." These words served as food for the road and then COVID came.

COVID made things happen for us. Children from the street were placed in our care and organisations reached out with food parcels, clothes, and toys. And then, after one of my many nights of staying up late with Google, I came across DG Murray Trust. "Why not? Just send the proposal, then you can't say you never tried," I told myself. It was an online application which took me three nights to finish, as I could only work on it at night. A few weeks later, I received a call and then a visit from SCAT. A direct commission from DG Murray Trust. Then the regular visits from SCAT, all the questions, sending documents, proof of registration, etc. And then the letter stating the amount. This was the best news ever! The wonderful thought that children are now not only going to be protected, but their other basic needs would be met.

I found myself through the Women in Leadership programme offered by SCAT. I started to know who I am and where I am going. We are currently expanding to after-school classes. Tsantsabane Centre of Hope acquired land from the municipality and children are fed daily. Other organisations have reached out to us, and progress is beginning to happen for the children and community of Postmasburg. Currently we need fencing and buildings, a park home perhaps. Proposals have been sent, and we await feedback.

I've also recently learned that *Kanniedood* is not such a bad name. According to Maroela Media¹, a *Kanniedood* is a type of aloe, a strong, hardy plant that can survive for long periods without water. The name also refers to people who are tough and have great endurance. So yes, please call me *KANNIEDOOD*.

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."



1. van Heerden, S. (2015) Woord: *Kanniedood*, Maroela Media. Available at: <https://maroelamedia.co.za/afrikaans/taaltoffie/woord-kanniedood/> (Accessed: November 1, 2022).



Sinothando Mnyazi with her clay vessel



Back to Front: Desiree Brandt, Bernice Roeland (Wellness Facilitator) & Phumeza Sibengile



Seed packets from the Wellness Box



Claywork session



Back to Front: Sizeka Mavumengwana, Samantha Van Den Heever, Desiree Brandt



Medicine making with Bernice Roeland, Wellness Facilitator



Participants decorating their Wellness Boxes



Bodymapping Exercise



Foodgardening with Bernice Roeland, Wellness Facilitator



Claywork session with Joanne Harding, SCAT Director



Decorating the Wellness Box



Groupwork with Mandisa Mbaligontsi, Wellness Facilitator



Getting ready for the claywork session



MY LONG AND WINDING ROAD TO BECOMING A LEADER

Noluthando Festile was nervous when she was offered a position as director of the Interchurch LDA, but her confidence in her ability was boosted by the SCAT WiL training.

I grew up in Duduza, a location in Tinara in the Eastern Cape. I was raised by my grandparents, my mother and father.

My siblings and I were loved by our grandmother, who was very compassionate, as well as by our grandfather, who was handsome and tall.

I attended Matshaka preschool, went to Sikhothina Primary, and then moved to Molly Blackburn High School, where I successfully completed Grade 12. I did not know what career to choose, but had a desire to progress further with my studies.

I was taught by teachers who were proud of me. My Maths teacher, Mrs Mbana, advised me to pursue Radiography as a first choice and Environmental Health as a second choice in my university application.

I wrote my June exams and was awarded best performer in Accountancy and isiXhosa. This motivated me to study harder so that I could pursue higher education. I passed Grade 12 with flying colours and went to study Environmental Health at Nelson Mandela University.

When I completed my third year of study, I applied for community service, which is required for someone in my



programme of study so that you can practise as an Environmental Health Practitioner. When the list of people who were accepted for community service came out, my name was not there.

I cried my lungs out and I asked myself why God hated me so much. I was committed to my studies and I got great results. I asked the National Department of Environmental Health why I was not accepted, and they said there was no application form with my name. They told me to enquire at the University.

I went to see the administrative secretary in our Department and she said my forms were with other forms that were sent to the National Department of Environmental Health. It was not easy, but I had to accept that I would not be doing community service.

So, in 2013 I was sitting at home with my Diploma and B.Tech. I was hopeless, frustrated and angry at myself for choosing Environmental Health. Through my friend's big brother, I managed to get temporary jobs as a meat inspector in different abattoirs. At least I could take care of myself and my family with the little I was earning. While I was busy with those jobs, I was offered a job at a poultry abattoir as a meat inspector. I only stayed there for a month and quit before I was paid, as the working environment was not healthy for me.

While I was busy applying for my driver's licence, I got a call for an internship in Community Services at the Eastern Cape Department of Health and Sundays River Municipality. I was welcomed by my mentors, sisNoxolo Matshaka and Ambesiwe Bavuma, very humble human beings who did their best to equip me. They made sure that I was getting all the knowledge and information I needed as young as I was at that time.

While busy with my internship, I fell pregnant with my firstborn. The internship came to an end before I had given birth. I was stuck at home, unemployed and with a baby. Things were not easy, but with the help of my baby's father, I did not have many complaints.



In 2017, I got a three-month contract job with the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality as a coordinator of a project from April to June. In September, I received a call from the previous Director of Interchurch LDA who ask me to join the organisation. She explained that, "There is no money in this sector, but I am promising you that you will learn a lot and receive many opportunities. You will be empowered and equipped here."

I accepted the offer and started as a programme manager on the 1st of October. I worked for the organisation tirelessly, making sure that my community was being serviced. We worked during COVID because we could not sit at home as the community needed our help during that time.

In 2021, there were rumours that I would be promoted to become the director of the organisation. While still thinking about that, I fell pregnant. Yho! I was scared for myself, as I had been put on a pedestal.

While I was still doubting myself about the position, the opportunity of WiL presented itself and the board chose me to be the one who would join the programme. I am thankful for that because that's where I learned a lot about myself: who I really am and the characteristics of a good leader. That's where I was groomed, motivated and encouraged. The beautiful Ma Tsidi was one of the people who encouraged me and said, "You can do this Noluthando. Your organisation didn't make a mistake by appointing you as a new director. You have the potential. Just have confidence in yourself." Ma Tsidi, together with my previous director, believed in me. They encouraged me, they were and they still are supportive human beings.

After giving birth to my second child, I returned to perform my duties as the director of the organisation. My parents, especially my mother, made sure that even though I am single mother that should not stop me from developing and reaching out, not only in my organisation, but also in my community.

I want to be leader who leads by example. A leader who is eager to learn and knows that *Umntu ngumntu ngabantu*¹. I want to make sure that my community is empowered in all aspects of life. I want to be a leader who makes sure that there is a reduction in GBV stats. A leader who carries herself with pride, confidence; who does not discriminate against anyone, despite race, gender or class. I want to make sure that my vulnerable community is served.

I want to build a good community where there is peace, bringing back the spirit of Ubuntu, love and harmony, where we value each other as people who are working together to build a community.

1. A person is a person through/because of (other) people; you are who you are because of how you relate to others around you.





WiL fellows crafting their clay characters and enacting their stories during the writing workshop in Phase 4 of the leadership training



UHAMBO LWAM, IBALI LAM

Igama lam ndi nguNomaxabiso Nesi, ndineminyaka engamashumi amathathu anesibhozo (38). Ndinomntana omnye endamzalela kwindawo encinci yase Alicedale. IAlicedale. Xa uyijonga iAlicedale unokuthi yindawo ehlala abantu abohlukileyo ngokwengqondo. Mna ndizalwa ngumama notata uNesi ongasekhoyo. Sikhuliswe ngumama wam owayenguTishalakazi, umama uzame ngandlela zonke ukuba siphile, sifunde kwaye siphumelele.

Amabanga am aphantsi naphezulu ndiwafundele eHendrik Kanise Combined School eAlicedale. Emva kokuba ndiphumelele ibanga lam leshumi ndiye ndahamba ndayokwenz' izifundo zobuNtatheli eMSC, eGqeberha. Emva kokugqiba izifundo zam eziphakamileyo ndayendaqhubeka ndahlala eGqeberha ndikhangela umsebenzi kodwa ngelishwa azange ndiwufumane, ndaphindela ekhaya eAlicedale ngo 2007.

Alicedale

Abantu balapha eAlicedale bayafunda qha kunqabe amathuba omsebenzi okanye kufunwe amava. Eyonanto ibixhaphakile ziprojekthi zika rhulumente, ezi projekthi zincipha ulutsha kunye nabantu abadala abanesakhono sokuqala amashishini nokufumana izakhono. Ekubeni ndibonile ukuba ukuhlala nje kuzandenza ndimkelwe zingqondo ndaye ndazimanya namaqela olutsha. Ku lamaqela olutsha safumana uqeqesho lwenyanga ezintathu kwi Upholestery, safumana kunye ne mali. Emva koko savunyelwa ukuba siziqalele awethu. Sizamile ukuba masisebenze kodwa bekukho abant' abavala indlela yethu ngoba imali yayiphantsi kwezandla legqembu elilawulayo. ***"Sixelelwe ukuba hay hay niyibiza gqithi imali veki naveki soloko nifuna ukuthengela kanibuye umva xa sicela imali ye mpahla zokusebenza (material)".*** Ngelishwa iprojekthi leyo yaye yaphela ngoba kwakungekho nkxaso.

Emva kwenyanga ndihleli phantsi ndingasebenzi ndaye ndafumana umsebenzi kwi projekthi Yesebe Lezendlela Nezothutho kwakulungiswa indlela N10. Ndiphangele apho inyanga ezimbini ndifundisa abantu kwi Small Plant hire.

Ngenye imini abantu bekomiti yasekuhlaleni bafika ekhaya bandicela ukuba ndiyoncedisana nosisi ongu Lesley Manewell. Igama le nkampani eyayisetyenzelwa ngu Lesley yi Alicedale Development Fund. Le nkampani yayinik' osomashishini abakhasayo nabaqalayo imali. Lesley Manewell wandamkela ngezandla ezifudumeleyo waze wandifundisa umsebenzi omnintsi, wandongeza wandixhasa ngekhosi yekhompuyutha Excel and Advance. ULesley waye ngumama omhlophe kway' ebethanda kakhulu ukusebenza ngabantu kunye nabantu basekuhlaleni, ebenceda kangangoko anako, ***"Precious, you need to learn everything that is to know because this world is full of people who are greedy scammers and frauds"***. Kuthe ke emva kokuba uLesley esutywe kukufa ndangena ezinyaweni zakhe, ndasebenza iminyak' emithathu kwade kwaphela imali kuba yayisetyenziswa ngumasipala ngoba yayihlal' ikhona kwi Trust Account. Sizamile nekomiti ukuba imali ibuye kodwa yayiba ngu "nam nawe", namhlanje sithethe nalo ngengomso sithethe nomnye kuMasipala wase Makana.

2015 obumi baqhubeka

Ndaye ndaziqalela ishishini lokuthengisa inyama, imifuno kunye notywala ukuze ndizame ukuphila, ndithechu ndizizamela ndingayekang'ukuba yingxenywe yolutsha nentshukumo ezithathwayo ekuhlaleni.

Ndayendacelwa ngu Phumla Gojela ukuba ndiyovolontiya kumbuthu ophantsi kwakhe ekuhlaleni, eCARE apha eAlicedale wathi ***"noske uzosincedisapha lomzuzu ungekafumani msebenzi"***. Siqhubile ke wade wabona ukuba makandise e ofisini apho andifundise khona ukubhala iingxelo, indululo, home based care, iinkonzo zomthetho ukubhalwa kwe ngxelo yomthengi ngoko hlobo abasebenza ngalo kuba zonke indawo zinohlobo lwazo lokwenza izinto. Siqhubile ke kwade kwafika isimemo sovavanyo sahamba sayokumela umbutho. Kolwa vavanyo sikwazile ukufumana ulwazi oluphangeleleyo ukuphuhlisa nengqondo zethu. Ndibonile ukuba ndinawo amandla nomdla wokufunda nokongeza ulwazi phezu kweli ndinalo.

Bekufakwe elinye igqiyazana elingummi waze Zimbabwe ebelivolintiya kwa CARE kwi projekthi yokuthunga kodwa kwenzeka ukuba angahlali emva koko wayeka emsebenzini ngezizathu esingazaziyo. Uhleli uMnxibelanisi elungisa le ngxaki kunye neProgramme Officer uTat' uVuyo Msizi ecebisa ukuba kufuneka abekhona umntu obhinqileyo omele iCARE ixesha lingekapheli. Ndabizwa nguMnxibelanisi endikhuthaza ukuba mandingene kule nkqubo kuba ebona isakhono sam endinaso nokuthanda ukufunda into entsha rhoqo nokwazi ukuba ndinomdla wokuzi phuhlisa.



LEADING IS ABOUT LISTENING

Nomaxabiso Nesi is passionate about serving the people of her small village of Alicedale, especially those who are underprivileged.

I am a 38-year-old mother of one child. I was born in a tiny village called Alicedale. My father passed on when I was six years old in 1990 and my mother raised us. As a teacher, she tried to ensure that we studied and succeeded. I finished primary school and high school at Hendrik Kanise Combined School in Alicedale. After I passed Grade 12, I pursued Media studies in Gqeberha, formerly known as Port Elizabeth (Bhayi). I studied from 2003 - 2005 at MSC College until I graduated. After graduating, I struggled to find employment and eventually went back to Alicedale in 2007.

I saw that waiting for a job and doing nothing is not good because I would lose my mind. I became a member of a youth group which found money for training in upholstery. We were trained for three months and were granted permission to start our business. We tried our best to make our business work, but the project ended as a result of a lack of support from customers. I got a job placement for two months being trained in small plant hire.

Lesley Manewell worked for the Alicedale Development Fund (ADF), which assisted upcoming and small businesses with funding. She tried to help the community to the best of her ability. She used to say to me, "You need to learn everything you need to know because this world is full of people who are greedy scammers and fraudsters, so you better be equipped, My Dear." She employed me, but she later died of cancer.

I then started a business selling meat, vegetables and alcohol to try my best to make a living.

In 2016, Phumla Gojela asked me to volunteer in an organisation that was under her wing, which is called CARE. As a volunteer I worked as a teacher at the crèche. I was then moved to the office by Sis Phumla, who taught me how to write reports and proposals, do home-based care, paralegal services and write statements for clients.

2021 Women in Leadership workshop

This programme has been of great help to me. Before the programme, I used to do things out of anger and impatience, but now I attentively listen to what someone is saying. If someone has a problem, I find ways I can help, but I also make myself a priority. My wellbeing is important and I have learned ways to understand and work with people.

I will continue to work in service of my community while I have the ability and strength. I will work for unity and fight against the infringement of human rights of the people of Alicedale, especially those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.



EMVA KOBUMNYAMA KUELA UKUKHANYA

Igama lam ndingu Nontsikelelo Thonjeni, isiduko Sam ndingu Jola Mphankomo udam Dosini Tholelomtwaqazi Qengeba. Ndizalwa ngubani? Ngumbasela Nontombayojoli ngokoyika ezinye Mthabaza, igama lakhe nguPhumla. Ndizalelelwe kwilali yaseBalasi kwidolophu yase Flagstaff. Ndingumntwana wesine kubantwana bakamama.

Bendikumabanga aphantsi ukuqala kwam ukuba nomdla wokuba negalelo kwizinto ezenziwayoekuhlaleni ngabanye abantwana. Nangona bendingumntu ongathandi kuthetha okanye onentloni. Bendinomdla wokususa ezintloni ndinazo xa ndinokuba phakathi kwabantu abalingana nam kuba zininzi izinto ebezisenziwa elalini ebezinika umdla kakhulu. Iphupho lam khangela lifezeke ngelaxesha

Yhooo khawume ndikuxelele ndikuxelele ndiyazi awuzukholwa. Mama wam nguye obengumqobo wokufezekisa iphupho lam, ubengafuni ukuba ndibenxalenye yezinto ezenzekayo futhi bendingakwazi ukudlula emayalelelweni womzali wam. Bekufanele ndithobele umthetho wasekhaya nangona bekubuhlungu kum. Ubendixelela mhlophe uba mninzi umsebenzi endinokuwenza aphenhlini. MMMH ubetshintsha ebusweni athi awuyi apho Nontsikelelo ngamazwi akhe awo. Bendifa namthanyana.

Kuthiwa esixhoseni kuqala kubemnyama xa kuzokhanya. Athi amangesi wona after darkness there is a light. Ngo 2014 ndingenekwi LDA apho ndifikele kumanina abexelenga khona. Andamkela ndingazi kwanto ngezinto ezenziwa khona ncaasana, bandixelela uba likhaya lam lesibini kuba ixesha elininzi ndizolichitha khona kunasekhaya ngoku. Bekusenziwa



programs ezohlukene uninzi lwazo zisenziwa ezilalini apho kufuneka ume phambi kwabantu uthethe nabo. Bendisoyika kemna kuba andiqhelanga kuthetha phambi kwabantu kodwa ndaxelelwa ukuba nam kufuneka ndithethile yeyona ndlela ndizofunda ngayo leyo ukuba yinkokheli lonto ayizukwenzeka ngosuku olunye. Lonto yandenza ndabona ukuba ndizo ukukhanya kusemnyango. Ekugqibeleni ndikwazi ukuma phambi kwabantu nguzethemba.

Kwi LDA yam ndinguyena ubemncinci ngokumqathango we application nokuthi babone kufanele ukuba ndibeyinxalenye njengenkokheli esakhulayo ukufumana imfundiso zokuba inkokheli kufanele ibenjani, iziphathe njani. Ukufumana uba ndiloluphi uhlobo lwenkokheli ndilungisephi. Ndifumane amanye amava.

“koludliwano ndlebe bendinalo no Coach wam lundenzandabanoxolokwizinto ebezindihlupha apha ebomini...”

Kwindibano yethu yokuqala siyenze ngobuxhaka balemihla kodwa kwabayimpumelelo kuba ndandingayazi ukuba kunentlobo ntlobo zenkokheli. Ndifunde ukubaluleka kokulawula imvakalelo njengenkokheli. Kulapho ndibone ukuba ndiyeyiphi intlobo yenkokheli ntolelo ebendingayazi lonke ixesha, ndiye ndazibona uba ukuba mandilungise ntoni kwileadership skills zam. Ndifundile ukuba inkokheli funeka iziphathe njani, ithethe njani nabantu, uhlobo lokunxiba, unxibelelwano nabantu ebakhokheleyo. Ndifunde ukuba inkokheli kufuneka ithembeke, ithethe nabantu ebakhokheleyo xa izothatha izigqibo, ingathathi izigqibo ezizolungela yona kuphela, Mayifikeleleke ebantwini. Inkokheli mayikwazi ukuthetha izigqibo ngokukhawuleza xa kukhona emergency ihlale ine strategy zokulungisa nayiphi na imeko ejongene nayo. Ndifundile ukuba inkokheli mayibenovelolwano. Ndifundile ukuba xa uyinkokheli kubalulekile ukuba ukwazi ukuzinakelela ukuze ukwazi ukunakekela abantu obaphetheyo (self-care and wellness). Ndifundile nango kwenza amachiza (medicine making) indifundise lukhulu ngokubaluleka kwendalo (body mapping) ndifunde ukubaluleka kokudlula kwizinto ezindivise kabuhlungu ndijonge ezintweni ezintle ezenzekileyo ebomini bam.

Bendikhangeni ndiyazi uba kukhona izinto ebendinga ndidlulile kuzo until ndafumana coaching ebendingayazi noba zintoni ezithethwayo xa kuyo. Coaching yenze ndabona impilo ngenye indlela bendingayazi kukhona ubudlelana obukhulu kangaka kwimvakalelo zama nakwindlela ezisenbenzayo. Koludliwano ndlebe bendinalo no Coach wam lundenza ndaba noxolo kwizinto ebezindihlupha apha ebomini, ukwamkela izinto endingena kwazi ukuzitshintsha, ukuzithemba, ukungazenyeki ndizijongele phantsi, ndiyeke ukucinga izinto ezi nageyive kodwa ndicinge zinto ezakhayo kuphela. Iyitshintshile impilo yam kakhulu. Coaching was a therapy kum.

Ndibamba ngazo zozibini Social Change Assistance Trust!



AFTER DARKNESS THERE IS LIGHT

Attending the SCAT Women in Leadership training course boosted Nontsikelelo Thonjeni's self-esteem and confidence.

Even though I was a shy child who was afraid to speak, it was in primary school that I first became interested in what was happening in the community. My mother did not want me to get involved in my community and I could not go beyond her word. I had to respect the rules of my home even though it was painful for me to do so. She would tell me, "There is a lot to be done here at home." So, I had to make peace with what she told me to do.

There is a Xhosa saying that it gets dark before light shines through. In 2014 I was part of a local development agency where women worked. They welcomed me even though I did not know how things were done. They told me that this was my second home because I would spend most of my time outside of my own home here.

The various programmes the agency was running required me to stand up and speak in front of people. I was scared to speak, but was told to go ahead because that was the only way to learn. The encouragement made me see the light and helped me overcome my fear.

I was very excited to be chosen to be part of the Women in Leadership training so that I could discover what kind of leader I want to be and gain additional experience.

The leadership programme

In our first training session, which was on Zoom, I learned the importance of governance. I also realised the type of leader I am. I learned that leaders must be trustworthy and open. They must communicate decisions with the people they are leading. When there is an emergency, the leader must come with a strategy to handle whatever challenge comes up.

I have also learned that a leader must have compassion; that self-care is important so that you are able to care for others. I learned about medicine-making and the importance of nature.

Coaching sessions

Coaching has helped me to see things differently. Conversations with my coach brought me peace. I developed an acceptance of things I can't change. My self-confidence has improved and I learned how to stop having negative thoughts and to think positively. Coaching has helped to transform my life. It was therapy for me.

Thank you, Social Change Assistance Trust!





MY ANGELS LIVE ON THROUGH MY WORK AS A COMMUNITY LEADER

Nonceba Ndala has had to endure the loss of her pillars of support, but their positive influence on her life lives on through her development as a community leader.

I grew up in a very small town called Dordrecht in the Eastern Cape. Dordrecht is surrounded by farms and villages. It was founded in 1856 by Baron Smiddolff, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, who named the town after Dordrecht in The Netherlands.

I was raised by my grandmother. I went to Sinako Primary School, now known as Chris Hani Full-Service School, and later attended Masikanyise High School where I obtained my matric.

My grandmother was an angel sent by heaven in my life. She was a lovely, compassionate mother. She always had a smile on her face. I can still picture her in the traditional clothes which she loved to wear. She was short and heavy and had to walk with a sick.

When she passed away, I had no money to further my studies. In the same year she left us, my brother also passed away, and the following year I lost my father.

After my grandmother passed away, my sister was there for me. She gave me hope, confidence and support. She always said, "Don't give-up. You are strong. You can do anything you want to do."



I was very proud when I started my first job as an Adult Basic Education teacher. Later I was recruited as the secretary for the committee which governs The Dordrecht Legal Advice & Community Development Agency. I learned a lot as a committee member. It was through my work as secretary that I was hired as the administrator for the organisation. Now I am a field worker.

Unfortunately, my sister passed away from COVID-19 complications. I was heartbroken, but God always has plans.

“Don’t give-up. You are strong. You can do anything you want to do.”

My coordinator chose me to be part of the Women in Leadership training programme. She trusted me and knew I was willing to learn more. The training programme taught me a lot about public speaking, the importance of taking care of yourself and your own personal development. I will always remember that it is not a leader’s job to fix all the community’s problems, but you need to work together with the community to help them help themselves.

I have lost many of the angels who guided me in my life, but their love remains with me as I grow in my role as a leader. I hope I can be an angel to others in my community.





WATHINTA UMAMA WATHINTA IMBOKODO

UPhumeza Sibengile uzifumanele ikhusi kubudlelwana bamakhosikazi aqhuba imizabalazo efanayo.

Gabada!!! Gabada!!! Mbabala yehlathi kuba ezethafa azinanqatha ngub'ende ayinyathelwa; inyathelwa ngabayaziyo ngoba iyadabuka.

Izintw"ezimabalengwe ezabala amabal'engwe ukusuka emsileni iyokuma entloko Izinto ezilima kubalele kodwa abanye balinde imvula.

Ndlu ka Makhatha owakhokela ibutho lika Mthimkhulu ebukumkanini baMhlubi ngesinqe sooDlamini, ooNkomo, amaBhele, AbaThembu oHlotshane ke ukutsho.

Umafungwashe, intombi enye jwii phakathi kwa sibhozo amathole amaduna. Ndingu Phumeza elokubheka, nguPhumie katata wakhe. Ndingumama okhokela yedwa usapho. Ndomelele, ndiyanceda, ndiyavalelisa.

Ndomelele, Ndiyanceda, Ngiyavalelisa.

Ubomi ngumzamo kukho amahla ndinyuka, udibana nemimoya ebhudlayo, ibhudle nezidlele ingathi zezosana xa lugodola. Uhambe emeveni ngenxa yomntu, litshiswe lilanga igama lakho kwiimbutho zabagxeki. Zonke ezonto zikwenza uzithandabuze uzive uwedwa ulilolo, kungekho bani onokugquma umqolo, abufihle ubuze bakho, ngathi ndihlatywa ngomkhonto entliziyweni. Uzive sowuthetha wedwa usithi "Yini na bantu ndonephi? Kuba ndisuka efama? Kuba ndiphilisana nabantu? Yho! Bayaphi Ubuntu maXhosa asekhaya?"

Ndithi ndisekwezontandabuzo ndikhumbule imbongi yosiba umfo wakwaNgxokolo ngengoma umve esithi “Kuba mnyama kube mhlophe kuyimini kubusuku, kuyingqele kulilanga bayavela bayatshona kunjalo ubomi” ephindaphinda, kodwa ndimthanda xa esithi “kanti nezoomini azifani, into ethetha ukuthi nale iyedlula ayikho into esisimakade ebomini” ikwakhona nemiqobo ongenakuyinceda ekhoyo eyenzelwe wena khonukuze ube yinkokeli enamava ngoba njengenkokeli uzidla, uzingce nangembandezelo uzive uthabathathisa uphathelela ngenxa yokuba ubona ikamva eliqhakazileyo. Njenge Langa lehlobo xa liphuma.

Ndoyama, ndixhaseke, ndikhuthazwe, ndirholwe ngamazwi avela ku mnakwethu ndimve esithi ungumhlobo onomonde, unguNontlalontle wosapho, sonke sixhomekeke kuwe. Ukuwa kwekhaya siyayazi ukhona uzakwenza kwenzeke uvuselele izazela usicenga. Uyawakhetha amazwi uthethe ngobuchule ingakumbi xa kukho ukungaboni ngasolinye kusapho. Unendlela yokukwazi ukusombulula amaqhina asixakileyo singamadoda ingakumbi kwezemali. Ngalo lonke ithuba onalo usenza into uyenza ngokuzimisela ubeka umntu kuqala, uyandizinika ithuba lokumamela, uzincame kungekho mvuzo kude kukhalaze abantwana bakho. Ndixila kwintembeko, ukusebenza ngokuzikhandla, unomoya wobunye uhloniphe omncinci nomkhulu, zonke endizibalulileyo kukumamela nokuthwala imvelaphi yam namatile-tile eemfundiso endizifumeneyo zikwazile ukudibanisa kubomi bam nokukhula njengenkokeli.

Ngenxa yokufuna imbewu ngomlomo ndinentshisakalo kwicandelo lophuhliso loluntu ndiye ndazibandakanya nombutho wasekuhlaleni olwela amalungelo wabantu.

Ngenxa yentshisakalo nokulambela ulwazi ndizibone sendikule nkqubo yoomama abazinkokeli ndingene ndinale micelimgeni wongakwazi ukuthi “hayi” nokungakwazi ukuzinakekela ngokwasengqonweni nase mphefumleni, nangokuzigweba xa kukho into engahambi kakuhle kum, kusapho nasemsebenzini. Ndabona kukuhle ukufunda kwabanye oomama nokutshintshisana ngolwazi namava ngezinto esihlangabezana nazo emakhaya, nalapho sixelengela khona nasekuhlaleni.

Ndifundile ke ukuzazi mna, ndibeke phambili imigomo ezakukuncedisana ne izigqibo ezinzima. Ndikwazi ukuhlaza imo yemvakalelo zabantu endisebenizana nabo. Ndiuhloniphe neemeko abahlangabezana nazo. Naxa kusiza umsinga wamanzi ndixelise ingcongolo ndilale ndithi cwaka ndimamele, ade umsinga wamanzi agqithe. Ndizibona nam ndinodade, ndinendawo yokulilela nokuthetha ngokuphandle ndingafihlisi ndisazi ukuba ndikhuselekile kuTsepo “My life Coach” endikwaziyo ukumfumana ndithethe naye bucala ndinokuzithemba ndisazi kananjalo ukuba uzakundincedisa ukuthatha izigqibo ezizizo ngaphandle kokuzithandabuza, nditsho ndizive ndihlaziyekile emzimbeni, emoyeni nasengqonweni. Nditsho ndithathe amandla amatsha. Ndithi manzi anethole ke kuye. Andikwazi ukuthi cwaka kaloku ukungawabuleli amakhosikazi ebesikunye kule nkqubo besohlukile ngemvelaphi ngolwimi njalo njalo, kodwa sidityaniswa ngumbono omnye wokuba ziinkokeli.



YOU STRIKE A WOMAN, YOU STRIKE A ROCK

Phumeza Sibengile has found refuge in the fellowship of women leaders.

I am the first born, the only girl among eight children. A single parent, I am strong, helpful and protective.

Life is about trial and error. There are storms that you meet along the way, but they pass. You go through experiences as a human being and your name goes through the heat of human judgement. These things make you feel lonely, without anyone to cover your back and shield your nakedness. Like a spear piercing the heart, you find yourself speaking alone. What have I done? Is it because I am from the rural areas? Is it because I heal others? What happened to humanity, my Xhosa people?

There are hurdles along the way which you cannot do anything about. This happens so that you can be a leader with experience who takes pride even in the tribulations you go through. You keep journeying through life because you can see a bright future and a glimpse of the sun shining.

I am comforted by the words that come from my siblings when they say that I am a true friend and a social worker to the family who depend on me. "You are a good problem solver and you even solve what is hard for men, like handling finances. You do everything with diligence, you put other people first, you take time to listen. You make sacrifices without expecting a reward - so much that your children complain." I stick to faithfulness, working with diligence, the spirit of unity, respect for the young and old.

I have a burning desire for the development of other human beings. That is why I joined an organisation that fights for human rights. I had a desire to know and see myself in a women's programme that is led by women.

When I first joined the organisation, I had challenges in setting boundaries. I was struggling to take care of my mental health and I was harsh on myself when things didn't work out with my family or at work. It is good to learn from other women and get knowledge about the things we deal with at work and the society we live in.

I have learned about knowing yourself first, setting boundaries, making difficult decisions and understanding the different feelings of people, respecting the situations they go through.

When the tides of life come, I will learn to be still. I have found refuge, as I found sisters here, and I don't need to hide anything. I feel safe with Tshepo, my life coach, and I can speak in confidence, knowing that she will help me make good decisions. I feel motivated and refreshed in mind and heart, and I take on new strength.



DIS NOOIT TE LAAT OM TE LEER NIE

Sharoleen Morris beskryf hoeveel werkgewers haar leierskap potensiaal waardeer het, maar dat haar werklike deurbraak deur die SCAT WiL-opleiding gekom het.

Ek was gebore in 'n middelklas familie. Na my geboorte het my ma my gelos by my ouma en oupa. Ek het by hulle groot geword. Ek het my skoolloopbaan in Matroosberg begin; daarna is ek Touwsrivier toe om my skoolloopbaan te voltooi. Ek het tot graad 11 geleer. Daarna het ek my skoolloopbaan geëindig want my ouma was in 'n rolstoel gekluister en kon haarself nie help nie. Ek moes na haar omsien. 'n Jaar later het my ouma gesterf. My ouma se reuk was weg. Sy het altyd na sterksalf geruik en haar hare het altyd na baba olie geruik.

Na haar afsterwe het my oupa vir my gesê die bos waaragter julle skuil het, het afgebrand. In ander woorde jy moet die huis verlaat. Hy gaan nie vir my werk nie. Ek het op 17jarige ouderdom die huis verlaat, met net 'n doopseel in my hand.

Ek het Kaapstad toe gekom en aansoek gedoen vir my identiteitsdokument. Toe ek dit het kon ek vir my werk soek. Ek het 'n werk gekry in Bellville in Tygervallei by blankes waar ek in 'n buitekamer geslaap het. Ek het vir 2 jaar vir hulle gewerk totdat hulle verhuis.

Ek was weereens werkloos. Ek het in Blackheath vir my 'n tuiste gekry. 'n Vriendin van my het vir my 'n werk gekry by 'n viswinkel waarna ek 'n outjie ontmoet het en betrokke geraak het in 'n verhouding wat baie abusive was.

Ek het hom gelos en getrek. Ek het in Bellville in 'n woonstel gebly en in die viswinkel gewerk. My werkgewers het baie van my gehou. Hulle het my Lange genoem. Ek het weereens genot uit my werk geput. Ek het vir 12 jaar daar gewerk.





Daarna het ek weereens Blackheath toe getrek waarna ek my trouman ontmoet het. Ek het 'n seun en 'n dogter van die huwelik. Ons is in 2002 getroud en in 2017 geskei want hy het baie gedrink en was abusive op alle vlakke.

“Dit was my deurbraak. Ek het so baie geleer wat ek nooit geweet het nie.”

Ek het gaan leer vir 'n sekuriteitsbeampte en het 12 jaar as sekuriteit gewerk. Terwyl ek daar gewerk het, het my werkgever my potensiaal raakgesien en my 'n skofleier gemaak. Na my retrenchment het ek vir ses maande in my gemeenskap begin werk totdat Elbrie my genader het en gevra het of ek nie by Stepup Association wil kom werk as 'n administrator nie.

Ek het ingestem en op verskillende werksinkels gegaan totdat ek in 2021 gekies is as een van die vrouens in Women in Leadership opleiding.

Dit was my deurbraak. Ek het so baie geleer wat ek nooit geweet het nie. Wat soort leier ek is, want daar is verskillende leierskap styles. Ek het ook geleer van selfcare, van wellness, hoe om medisyne te maak, hoe om te mediteer, wat dit aan jou mental health doen, hoe om jou liggaam te waardeer.

Ek het ook my life coach Tshidi ontmoet en sy was fenominaal. Ek kon met haar alles bespreek en nog meer, ek het so baie oor myself geleer. Die skryffasiliteerder het my weereens geleer om my gedagtes neer te skryf.

Ek werk nog steeds in my gemeenskap en my huis is altyd vol mense wat kom vir inligting. Vandag is ek nie spuit vir die WiL nie, want wat ek geleer het kan ek in my gemeenskap toepas.



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN

Sharoleen Morris describes how many employers have appreciated her leadership potential, but that her real breakthrough came through the SCAT WiL training.

I was born into a middle-class family. After my birth, my mother left me with my grandmother and grandfather. I grew up with them. I started school in Matroosberg and later went to Touws River to complete my schooling.

My school career ended in Grade 11. Because my grandmother was huddled in a wheelchair and couldn't help herself, I had to look after her. A year later, she died. My grandmother's smell was gone - she always smelled like strong ointment and her hair smelled like baby oil.

After her passing, my grandfather said to me, "The bush you were hiding in has burned down." In other words, he wanted me out of the house. I left home at the age of 17, with only a baptism certificate in my hand. I went to Cape Town and applied for an identity document so that I could look for a job.

My first job was in Bellville, in Tyger Valley. I was a domestic worker for a white family. I lived in their outhouse for two years until they moved to Strand. I then found a home in Blackheath and a friend got me a job at a fish shop.

I lived in an apartment in Bellville and worked in the fish shop. My employers really liked me. I worked there for 12 years until I married my husband in 2002 and moved to Blackheath again. I had a son and a daughter with him, but we were divorced in 2017 because he drank a lot and was very abusive.

I then worked as a security officer for 12 years. My employer noticed my potential and made me a shift leader, but eventually I was retrenched.

I started working in my community for half a year until I was approached to join the Stepup Association. When I was selected as one of the women to attend the WiL training, that was my breakthrough.

I learned so much about different leadership styles and what kind of leader I am. I also learned about selfcare, how to make medicine and meditate. My life coach, Tshidi, was phenomenal. I was able to discuss everything with her and learned so much about myself.

The writing workshop facilitator also taught me how to write down my thoughts. I still work in my community and my house is always full of people who come for information. I often use what I learnt at WiL in my community work.





HATERS AND THOSE WHO PUT OBSTACLES IN YOUR PATH CAN BE YOUR DESTINY HELPERS

Samantha Van Den Heever powered through her brother's suicide, being a high school dropout and people who discouraged her dreams to become a qualified social worker and the manager of her LDA.

"Girlfriend, it is now or never," I said to myself on that windy morning while getting out of bed. The suicide of my brother left a bitter taste in my mouth. A social worker who was supposed to bring hope took that one gift of hope away from him. I experienced feelings of guilt. "If only if I could see the signs, he would be still alive," I thought. My next thought was, "I will become a social worker and help others to the best of my abilities." But I was a high school dropout. How would it even be possible to become a social worker? I decided there and then that I had to talk to Mr John, the night school teacher.

Mr John encouraged me to do my matric, which I passed with university exemption. What now? I could apply for bursaries, but then I would have to leave my baby with my mother. That dream was suppressed there and then. I applied for a job at the local Advice Office and I can still hear the echo of the chairperson's voice, "Congratulations you are the successful candidate." My head started to spin in disbelief. I just accomplished my second milestone in one year.

That LDA was funded by SCAT and I attended workshops almost every month. For the first time I, a barefoot girl from Komaggas who was taught English

in Afrikaans, had to present in English and was introduced to group work and public speaking. I can still remember how hot my ears were and how tight my chest was every time I had to present. Little did I know it was all preparation for my current journey.

I started at Child Welfare South Africa as an administrator and it was there where my dream of becoming a social worker was watered again. My journey was full of pain and struggles. I did experience obstacles in the form of people's actions, words and looks. Today I call them my Destiny Helpers. If it was not for their negativity, I would not push myself so hard. I enrolled for a course in social auxiliary work and finished it. One night at a function, a teacher asked me, "Why did you study for half of a thing? You will always be the helper of the social worker and not a real social worker." The rebel in me took that to heart and I enrolled for a formal degree in social work. One of my colleagues at the time tried to discourage me, saying it would be too difficult to study because I had to juggle being a mother, a wife and work. Once again, she was a Destiny Helper, because I pushed myself to finish my degree. Today I am a qualified social worker.

"My story is living proof that you can do anything if you put your mind to it. If I can do it, so can you. Haters can actually be the ones that push you into your destiny."

In 2020 my manager and the administrator at the current LDA where I am working resigned. We were uncertain about the state of the organisation. Whoop, whoop, then came COVID. What now? In hard lockdown the Management Board asked me to act as manager. I was so anxious, confused and afraid because here I was asked to manage an organisation in a pandemic. I felt like a headless chicken at times. We could not do community outreaches as usual and all activities changed to virtual. At some point it felt like I was trying to swim, but was drowning. I had to attend management meetings, write proposals, do presentations, negotiate with corporate companies. I was totally in doing mode.

After fourteen years I hooked up with SCAT again and we got the good news that they would fund us for training. Knowing that they specialise in capacity building, I could breathe again. True to what they stand for, they selected me to be part of the Women in Leadership (WiL) training. Wow! What a journey it was. I learnt so much about myself as a women leader. The coaching sessions that they arranged for the WiL participants is a winning recipe. My coach assisted me to become more assertive in my decisions. Today I can say I am a better leader. I also know my story will not end here; this is just the beginning.





MY VOICE IS THE ROAR OF A LION

Sibongasonke Daca is 29 years old and has just finished her LLB degree at UNISA. She wants to use the power of her voice and leadership skills to develop young mothers in her community.

"Welcome to Coffee Bay Christian Comprehensive school - no Mama, no Tata, dog eat dog and the big dog gets the bone." This was how my dorm mates welcomed me to boarding school. It was each one for themselves.

Growing up, I was told by my mother, aunt and other women in the community that I had a big mouth. The rocks they threw at me were, "You will never marry. You talk too much. If you do marry, we pity the person who marries you. You are bossy. You are boyish." I understand now that they grew up in an era when women must not question anything.

I carried these rocks with me when I started boarding school. There were twins in my class who were very pretty. They were skinny, light in complexion and had soft, tiny voices. Because they had each other, they had an advantage. They did not need to have a friend or someone to talk to. They could just speak to each other. Everyone wanted to be their friend.

I am a dark and beautiful version of my dad, but I have a big, booming voice. Every time I spoke in class, everyone would laugh. I do not know how many times I tried to change my voice to fit in. What saved me was my brain. Classmates befriended me so I could help them with schoolwork. I spent most of the time with my smart friends who were also not popular, but the teachers respected us because we were diligent. Because of this, no one could bully us. We survived the bullies knowing we would report them to the teachers. I even used this weapon to help the quiet ones in class.

My dad was the one person who encouraged me to be me. He would even say he doesn't want any cows

in exchange for me. He was my pillar. My teachers never saw my talkativeness as a problem either. I remember they would even say to others, "Your voice must be bold and clear like Daka's." This made me realise that having a big voice is a good thing.

I then thought of my voice as the roar of a lion which God gave me because I am a natural born leader. This voice makes me communicate clearly and when I speak, everybody listens.

When I started studying law, I went to volunteer at the local advice office which focused on human rights. The coordinator handed me posters to put up in communities around mine. I was also asked to inform traditional leaders about the work the advice office does. When you go to a traditional leader you must be knowledgeable about what you are giving them, so that forced me to educate myself on the advice office's services.

"I was a rough diamond and this leadership course polished, shaped and gave me direction. It has helped me understand myself."

Community members would also come to me for clarity about the posters. This was recognised by one of the members in the advice office who asked me to assist on a gender inequality programme. I also assisted with facilitating outreach. The coordinator saw my ability and asked me to stay when my contract as a volunteer ended. He admired that I was a fast learner and that I stood my ground. When others were threatened by the leader in me, he gave me a chance and put my name forward for SCAT's Women in Leadership course. I will forever be grateful to him for this opportunity.

I was a rough diamond and this leadership course polished, shaped and gave me direction. It has helped me understand myself. I remember when on the Zoom meeting we were asked about our leadership styles, I said I do not have one - it depends on the situation. That made me doubt that I was a leader. I also thought leaders had no emotions and here I was a cry baby, which I thought made me a weak leader. I also learned to give time to myself and ask for help. The coaching sessions were amazing. They taught me so much about myself and how to be emotionally aware. I learnt from the wellness workshop how to use natural products that cost nothing to make - scents and massage oils for myself and others to make me or them feel special. I hope to share that with the young mothers I would like to mentor, to give them a spa experience, to remind them of their worth. This takes me to the type of leader that I would like to become.

I want to be a leader who is fair and helps develop others, like the LDA developed me and gave me a chance. I want to share all that I have learned here with the women in my community, especially young mothers because no one focuses on improving them and giving them a chance. Their struggles affect their children's growth and future.





MY FUTURE WAS BLEAK, BUT NOW IT IS BRIGHT

Sinothando Mnyazi had no job, but she had to carry the heavy burden of feeding and caring for her young siblings after her mother died of cancer. Her life changed after she started farming at Entlango Co-op and joined the SCAT Women in Leadership programme.

I am 29 years old and this is my story.

My high school teachers encouraged me to study further because I used to pass with flying colours. I loved school, but in my matric year my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was tough because my mother was sick, but that didn't discourage me. My grandmother took me to stay with her to help me avoid stress while I was writing my exams. I did well and achieved my matric certificate, but I didn't apply to study further.

The only thing on my mind at that time was going back home to be with my sick mother. I stayed with her for six months until she was readmitted to hospital. She never returned.

I remember the day we heard that my mother had passed away as if it was yesterday. It was a Monday. The sun was bright and hot, and my siblings, my father and I were having lunch. My father had just lost his job at a car wash. He had to come home to stay with us because we were alone when our mother was hospitalised.

My father and I had to explain to my young siblings that our mother has passed away and that she would never come back. It was painful because my younger brother was just six years old. He was lost. He didn't understand what we were saying.

My life turned upside down because my siblings were still in the middle of the school year. We couldn't move to stay with our grandmother. I had to be a mother to my siblings, waking up at 5 am to warm water and making

porridge for them before they went to school. I had so many chores: washing clothes, cleaning and cooking. I did not get a chance to enjoy my youth because I was so focused on my siblings, trying to fill that gap of a mother.

I remember one day I was chilling with my friends. We had R5 each, so they were saying we must buy sweets and ice. I told them I would buy beef stock so that later I could have something to eat with my siblings. Life was so tough. Some days we would go to bed without food. Our future was bleak, with no dreams. When I was with people during the day, I always wore a mask to hide the pain, anger and frustration of poverty, but at night I had to take off my mask. The thoughts of my reality started to rush back. Why did God give me such a heavy burden to carry?

I had to look for a job even though all I had was my matric certificate with no experience. I heard there was a farm 25 kilometres away from our community. One morning I went to the manager of the farm, who lives in my community, to ask for a job. He said I should leave my CV and he would contact me if something came up. Months went by with no contact, but one day I received an SMS saying Monday I must report for work. I could not believe it.

I joined Entlango Co-op, which does mixed farming. We plant tomatoes in tunnels, irrigate them and when they are ready, we harvest and pack them in 5 kg plastic bags and sell them. Now I have a job. I have something to put on the table for my siblings to eat.

Things started to improve. I could see the light. In 2020, I went on an AgriSETA (Agriculture Sector Education and Training Authority) learnership for six months. It really helped me because there was a stipend. My younger siblings didn't stop going to school. The Entlango LDA helped me a lot. When they employed me, they taught me how to farm, plant a crop till you harvest, and do invoices. We were two young women among the elderly women and men. We learned fast because we were young. When the manager was not in, I could step up doing admin and selling the vegetables.

The manager saw my ability and introduced me to SCAT's Women in Leadership training course. We started with Zoom meetings because of COVID. We learned how to be a leader during a crisis, working under pressure and making good decisions, wellness, and knowing how to take care of yourself before others.

SCAT helped me a lot. I was shy and couldn't communicate well with others. The young women in the leadership training group motivated and encouraged me to gain confidence. Now I am no longer shy in front of people. My public speaking has improved. I talk with no fear and say what is on my mind without violating others' rights. I know how to control my emotions.

Now I am a mother to my beautiful daughter. I really hope my child can learn from me that poverty doesn't determine your future. I hope SCAT can involve other girls in the leadership programme. It really helped me grow, to express my feelings and become a good leader.





BREAK THE CHAIN THAT HOLDS US BACK

Sizeka Mngoma-Mavumengwana was raised in a community where women were not seen as leaders. By leading by example, she is changing this perception.

I'm 41 years of age and grew up in villages where people believe in superstitions. Each village believes in a language of society that kills our humanity and confidence. That language killed my confidence because whenever I wanted to do or start something, I would worry about what the community would say.

Even our parents did not encourage us to be independent and to participate in the world with the intent to make a positive impact. Our community does not believe that woman can become leaders and make a positive impact on our lives.

When I was praying, I always asked God to reveal things that are hidden in my life. The Lord heard my prayers.

My journey of a thousand miles started with the single step of accepting myself as I am. I told myself that mistakes will lead to perfection, and I must start setting an example in my family sphere and then the community.

There are so many difficult challenges in our community. Mothers drink too much and neglect their children, the youth are using drugs, and people are losing confidence. I keep on asking God to give me the wisdom to handle this. I believe it's time to break the chain.

I got involved in my Local Development Agency after doing a course in Community Development and seeing the struggle of my communities. I created a programme in my LDA where we assess pre-schools, going to communities and talking about how our negative beliefs and criticism can kill confidence and affect this new generation.



When women try initiatives that will contribute to the development of the people, they think they will be asked who they think they are, that they'll be told they think they are better than everyone else and that they'll be underestimated for being women leaders. When women think of leading by example, they give up because of criticism. When I got involved with the LDA I told myself that it's time to take a stand and break the chain.

"I also learned to turn the negative into positive and disappointment into improvement in order to make a change."

When I saw the Women in Leadership course introduced by SCAT was looking for younger women, I was disappointed, but my programme officer advised me to apply nevertheless.

In addition to helping me become a better community leader, this course empowered me to manage all spheres of my life.

Ever since SCAT organised my life coach, Mrs Tsidi Tlale, I have also learned to introspect. She taught me how a leader should treat people, to respect their ideas and opinions. As a leader, I don't make decisions for others because I don't live with them and do not know their needs and wants. All I do is give advice.

I also learned to turn the negative into positive and disappointment into improvement in order to make a change.

I know that I'm not perfect, but I want to be a better leader who is always there for my community, while at the same time managing to set boundaries. I want to be a democratic leader and always think about others.





IT'S NOT HOW MUCH WE DO BUT HOW MUCH WE PUT INTO IT

Tlholohelo Tloti is committed to serving her rural community of Mount Fletcher as a leader who nurtures and creates other leaders.

I was born and raised in the rural area of Mount Fletcher in the Eastern Cape. I am a married woman with two beautiful girls. I started volunteering as a field worker at Mount Fletcher Advice Centre in 2019. Despite the fact that it was a non-profit organisation and the chances of not getting paid were high, I stayed.

I guess the love I had for my rural community and the suffering I have witnessed in our community gave me the desire to serve my community.

I always do my best. I try to put effort into everything I do. I get my motivation from Mother Teresa who once said, "It is not how much we do, but how much we put into doing it."

I was selected to be part of the Women in Leadership programme by the Mount Fletcher Advice Centre Coordinator, Mr. Hlati, board members and other field workers. It is not that I was better than anyone in the office, but I was fortunate enough for this opportunity to present itself to me. I did not hesitate to go on this course because it was always my dream to become a powerful, strong woman leader.

At the beginning of the programme, I truly had no idea what was expected of me. I was told that the programme had four phases. Phase 1 was conducted via Zoom because of the COVID pandemic. Then the last three



phases were face-to-face and they were really interesting. It was exciting to meet other powerful and strong women from different provinces.

Phase 1 introduced us to leadership: how we need to be focused, have a vision we can share with others. We were taught about what makes a good leader. We need to be responsible, to share tasks with other team members. Phase 2 was about how we need to present ourselves to others and use different leadership styles. Phase 3 was about the Wellness Box. We were taught how to create healing rituals in our daily lives using the content of the Wellness Box. We also learned about the importance of gardening, since it is good for our health and good for our soil.

"I always do my best. I try to put effort into everything I do."

I had marvellous sessions with my beautiful coach, mme Tshepo. Even though I had just met her, you wouldn't be able to tell because of the connection we had. I felt so free sharing whatever I needed clarity on. My coaching sessions were the best thing ever because I was able to express my feelings freely, whether workwise or family-wise. Thanks to mme Tshepo, I am now a fearless woman, able to face whatever challenges come my way.

This Women in Leadership programme has really improved my leadership style. Ultimately, I want to be a great leader who creates and nurtures other leaders. I now have a clear vision. I am able to think critically about the organisation I work in, understanding its strengths, weaknesses, threats, and how we need to work together as a team. I want to be a democratic leader, a leader who includes the team members to participate in the decision-making process.

I am really grateful to my team for believing in me. SCAT, thank you so much for the opportunity. Thank you, all the facilitators, for your time, love and support.





HOE MY VERVELING IN 'N KLEIN DORPIE MY 'N GEMEENSKAPSLEIER GEMAAK HET

Wasiela Douries wou nie haar kinders blootstel aan die daaglikse euwels van die Kaapse vlakte met sy aanhoudende misdaad, geweld en dwelm misbruik nie. Só het sy uiteindelik 'n gemeenskapsleier in die klein Sandveldse dorpie Graafwater geword.

Dit was 'n warm dag en my seun kom gewoonlik 12:00 uit die skool maar dit was al 14:30 en hy was nog steeds nie tuis nie. Ek was baie bekommerd en het hom gaan soek maar ek kry hom nêrens. "Waar kan die kind dan nou wees?" Ek bel die onderwyseres en sy sê hy is al lankal weg saam met die ander kinders.

My skoonsuster kom aangestap van haar ma se huis af en sy sê "Djy sallie wiet waa is jou kind nie". Ek sê toe vir haar "Ek soek my dood na hom, waar is hy?". Die antwoord wat sy my gee is die rede wat ek toe besluit om Graafwater toe te trek.

Bishop Lavis was nie meer die plek vir ons nie. Ek wou nie langer my kinders blootstel aan die daaglikse euwels van die Kaapse vlakte met sy aanhoudende misdaad, geweld en dwelm misbruik nie.

Ons trek Graafwater toe einde Desember 2017. Dis 'n mooi plek met vreemde mense en nuwe uitdagings. My ma en my skoonsuster het gehelp met die trek en dit was heel lekker want ons het gekuier en pret gehad. Januarie 2018 het toe gekom en almal moes terug huis toe en die kinders moes skool toe. Skielik was ons gesin alleen. Die kinders moes aanpas by 'n nuwe skool. Ek was bedags alleen, en dit was vreemd want in Bishop

Lavis het ek altyd mense rondom my gehad. Ek het begin depressief word en ek het ledig gevoel. Daar was niemand om mee te gesels nie want ek ken niemand nie. Vir weke gaan dit so aan totdat ek op 'n dag besluit om 'n werkswinkel van 'n plaaslike gemeenskapsorganisasie, Sandveld Local Development Agency (SALDA) by te woon.

Net daar begin 'n heel nuwe hoofstuk in my lewe. Ek was so geïntereseerd in wat SALDA doen dat ek myself as vrywilliger aangebied het. Dit het 'n maand gevat voordat hulle na my uitgereik het om te vra of ek op die SALDA Bestuurskomitee wil dien. Ek was skepties want wat weet ek dan nou van NPOs, maar Jonathan van der Westhuizen het iets in my raakgesien en my begin mentor. Met sy hulp, kon ek my voete vind en 'n bate vir die Gemeenskap word. Dit het gelei dat ek op die munisipale wyskskomitee Kleinboere kon verteenwoordig. Skielik was ek die "no-nonsense antie" wat almal respekteer en na opkyk en dit het goed gevoel. So goed voel ek dat ek myself wou bemagtig en veel meer vir die Gemeenskap doen. Deur SALDA het ek werksinkels bygewoon waar ek geleer het van geslagsgeweld, i.e. Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Na geakkrediteerde GBV opleiding van die Noordwes Universiteit word ek toe SALDA se GBV fasiliteerder.

Teen hierdie tyd was ek regtig op 'n ander vlak in ons Gemeenskap. SCAT, 'n bevondser van SALDA, het die Women in Leadership Fellowship bekend gestel maar daar was 'n ouderdomsbepanking van 35 jaar. Ek het ons SCAT Programme Officer, Colleen Alexander-Julies gebel en gevra hoe ek moet maak om deel te wees van die Program. Sy beveel my aan om 'n motiveringsbrief aan SCAT te skryf om te verduidelik hoekom ek deel van die Program moet wees. Ek het die brief geskryf en was gekies as 'n Women in Leadership Fellow.

Die eerste fase was op Zoom as gevolg van COVID maar ek kon nie lekker "connect" nie. Met Fase 2 het ons almal in die Kaap byeengekom en dit was die wonderlikste ervaring. Ek het baie geleer, veral oor myself en dit het 'n groot impak gemaak oor wat ek wil bereik in my professionele en persoonlike lewe. Ek het geleer dat dit nie so maklik is om 'n leier te wees nie en dat self-kennis 'n belangrike fondasie is vir leierskap.

Terug by die kantoor het my mentor, Jonathan van der Westhuizen, besluit om nuwe uitdagings aan te pak en die Koördineerders posisie by SALDA het oopgegaan. Ek het weereens getwyfel, maar as gevolg van veral die life coaching wat deel was van die WiL Fellowship het ek die kans gewaag om aansoek te doen. Twee weke na die AJV word ek toe aangestel as die nuwe Koördineerder van SALDA. Nuwe uitdagings was skielik op my pad.

My eerste groot stap as Koördineerder was na die derde WiL Fase waar ons blootgestel was aan die konsep van welstand en selfversorging a.k.a Wellness. Ek het sterk gevoel dat ek hierdie belangrike konsep en ervaring met ander vroue moes deel. Met behulp van SCAT se DFT befondsing reël ek toe 'n suksesvolle Wellness werkswinkel vir vroue in ons gemeenskap.

Ek is dankbaar vir die kans wat SALDA my gegee het. Ek sal aanhou opstaan vir vroue in my gemeenskap en help om hulle leiereienskappe te ontwikkel.



HOW MY BOREDOM LED ME TO BECOME A COMMUNITY LEADER

Wasiela Douries wanted to protect her family from the violence of the Cape Flats. This is how she started her leadership journey in the small Sandveld town of Graafwater.

Bishop Lavis, which is on the Cape Flats, had never-ending cycles of crime, violence and drug abuse, so I decided to move my family to the small town of Graafwater, about 300 km away. In Bishop Lavis there were always people around me, but in Graafwater there was no one to talk to and no one knew me. I was bored and depressed. It went on like this for weeks, until I decided to attend a workshop at this local community-based organisation known as Sandveld Local Development Agency (SALDA).

A new chapter of my life began that day. I was so interested in what SALDA was doing that I immediately volunteered my services. The Coordinator, Jonathan van der Westhuizen, saw something in me and started to mentor me. He got me involved on every possible platform, which included the municipal ward committee, where I represented small-scale farmers. He helped me find my feet and to be of service to the community. It felt so good to suddenly be known as that no-nonsense auntie who everyone looked up to and respected. This good feeling made me want to learn more and do more for my community.

SCAT, a funder of SALDA, opened applications for its Women in Leadership Fellowship, but there was an age limit of 35. I called Colleen Alexander-Julies, the SCAT Programme Officer, to ask what I must do to apply, as I really wanted to do the programme. She told me to write a letter to SCAT to motivate why I should be part of the programme. I wrote the letter and was selected to become a WiL fellow.

Due to COVID regulations, Phase 1 of the programme was facilitated on Zoom. It didn't make a big impact on me, as I couldn't properly connect, but Phase 2 was hosted in person in Cape Town and it was simply the most wonderful experience ever. I was blown away. I learned so much, especially about myself. I learned that leadership is not necessarily an easy thing and that self-awareness and self-knowledge are key if you want to lead.

Back at SALDA, Jonathan van der Westhuizen decided to pursue new challenges in his life and to step down from the Coordinator's position. He suggested I apply for it. I had my doubts, but thinking about what I was learning on the WiL programme made me agree. At the AGM a new management committee was selected and two weeks later they appointed me as the Coordinator of SALDA. Suddenly new challenges surfaced. My faith in my abilities wavered, but the life coaching sessions that were part of WiL helped a lot. I realised if I wanted to achieve something, it was up to me.



LEADERSHIP IS NOT ABOUT REWARDS, IT'S ABOUT SERVICE TO OTHERS

Zisanda Sibande lost both her parents when she was a young child. Raised by her older sister who encouraged her to study further, she is determined to become a leader who helps others.

I grew up poor. I used to pray that God would change my life for my children and family. I always thought about why my mother had to leave us alone on this earth and pass on. It is a very tough place to be. I told myself no matter how tough life is, I don't want my children to grow up the same way I did. Under whatever circumstances, I would protect them till the end.

I grew up not knowing my father. He died when I was a baby and my mother died when I was five years old. May her soul rest in peace. I was raised by a phenomenal woman, my sister. She was full of compassion and I did not doubt her love. My sister took care of my brother and me and had to drop out of school as a result. My sister is like a hen that protects its chicks. She was, and still is, the pillar of our home.

While I was growing up, my sister tried her best to make sure that we slept having eaten something, had clothes to wear, and attended school. At that time, both my brother and I were foster care beneficiaries. Our sister was our guardian.

When I was in Grade 10, I fell pregnant. I was so disappointed in myself and I was scared of how my sister was going to handle the matter. But, because of her motherly love and kindness, she was there for me. When I told the baby's father about the pregnancy, he



told me that I was accusing him because he came from a rich family. I was very hurt. He said that I must abort the baby, but my sister intervened and said, "My sister will never, ever have an abortion. The baby is a gift from God."

My sister said to me that she wanted me to study so that there would be least someone who completed matric at home. I cried and was so emotional. I asked her how we were going to survive if she was going to stop working and come back home to look after my baby. She said God would provide, because she wouldn't be able to watch my future go down the drain. I gave birth to a baby boy and my sister looked after him and asked me to go back to school. I passed my matric, not with good results, but at least I had made her proud because I was the first one at home to pass Grade 12 and I had fulfilled her wish.

After I passed my matric, I went to do a computer literacy course in one of the colleges. It was not easy for me when I was doing my matric. The stress that I went through because of my baby's father was the reason I got bad results. Then I remember one day, I went to him at his workplace to ask for money for the baby's food because the baby did not have anything to eat. He gave me R100 only and he said he wouldn't give me money like he gives money to people he dates.

I met a man who supported my child, my family and me. That helped a lot, as love, to me, was a foreign language. But after I met him, I felt his presence, his love. I asked him to enrol my sister into a security course, which he did. I wanted to appreciate my sister for all the good deeds she had done for me and I wanted her to rest from being a domestic worker.

I then found work at the LDA, Port St Johns Legal Advice Centre. It was a contract post and I appreciated the opportunity that I grabbed with both hands. I worked very hard, was dedicated to my work and represented my village. I worked as a caregiver and fieldworker. I persevered so that I could be called to work again. My boss at the LDA chose me to be part of WiL because of my hard work and dedication. My boss told me that they wanted someone who is dedicated, does not look for rewards and that I was seen as that kind of person. I joined the LDA because I wanted vulnerable people to know their rights, especially those who are not educated. I wanted to ensure that people's rights are not violated because of GBV, which is another pandemic in our land. Kids are being raped and abducted, and women are being violated often.

The WiL programme helped me learn how to manage my anger, especially towards my three kids. I would always shout at them. It also taught me about confidentiality for clients.

I want to be a leader who identifies critical factors, listens to others without interrupting, and talks over options when looking for solutions that benefit everyone. I don't want to be a leader who only looks for rewards for themselves. I want to be able to help others and end up with win-win solutions.





Joanne Harding (SCAT Director), Sinothando Mnyanzi and Tshepo Modise-Harvey (WiL Coach)



Joanne Harding, Desiree Brandt and Tshepo Modise-Harvey



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Joanne Harding, Phumeza Sibengile and Tshepo Modise-Harvey



Joanne Harding, Zisande Sibande and Tshepo Modise-Harvey



FAILING MATRIC TAUGHT ME TO NEVER GIVE UP

Twenty-nine-year-old Ziyanda Ntsoko thought failing matric was the end of the world, but she persevered and found her life's purpose when she joined the Zanoncedo Local Development Agency as a volunteer.

I was raised in a small village called Mphintsho in Tsholomnqa. I lived with my mother and father, my younger brother and sister. My mother was the one who always supported and encouraged me. She is a hero to me. When I failed matric in 2011, I knew I disappointed my parents, even though they did not say so.

The day the matric results came out I felt I should cry out loud because the feeling I had was so painful. I was the oldest; I was supposed to do things right so that my younger siblings could learn from me.

The following year I decided to go back to school to study those subjects that I failed. I went to a finishing school in town. After a few months of studying, I discovered the school was not registered with the Department of Education. I was disappointed all over again because I wasted my money. In 2013 I applied to the TVET college to study for a National Certificate (Vocational), which is similar to Grade 12, so at least I had another option. I studied there from 2014 to 2016 to complete my Level 4 in Safety in Society. During my final year I fell pregnant, but it did not stop me from going to school.

I passed, but the following year in 2017 I stayed at home to care for my baby. A friend told me about an organisation in Tsholomnqa called Zanoncedo and I was so interested in the work they did that I visited them



the very next day. When I arrived, a lady called Windisa Jimana welcomed me with warm hands and a lovely smile.

I told her that I was not working and that I was interested in volunteering for the Youth Care programme. I assisted Grade 4 and 5 learners after school. On Fridays I went to the office to submit a weekly report. I also started teaching young girls how to take care of themselves in the Peer Education programme. The staff of Zanoncedo were impressed with my work and offered me a job in the office as an administrator.

"I want to become a humble, strong, powerful leader and I will allow no one to stand in my way."

When I read the email from SCAT about the Women in Leadership training, I was very interested in joining because I thought we were going to be trained to work in Parliament or any government department. LOL! After attending the workshops, I've learned that we can be leaders in our community, work and in our home. Our first classes were online because of COVID-19. It was here where I saw the faces of all the other women on the course who welcome me with love.

I am very grateful to my coordinator for giving me the opportunity to take part in this programme because it helped me a lot. I am going to apply what I learned from my life coach, public speaking, and wellness to all parts of my life, especially my workplace. I want to become a humble, strong, powerful leader and I will allow no one to stand in my way.

THANK YOU!!!





WiL Team from left to right: Seth Thladi, Joanne Harding, Katleho Ramafalo, Brigett Matomela, Hilda Gertze, Vuyo Msizi, Tshepo Modise-Harvey (WiL Coach), Indiphile Matini, Nokukhanya Mchunu, Abigail Steedsman, Kate Mabye

"There's power in allowing yourself to be known and heard, in owning your unique story, in using your authentic voice." - Michelle Obama





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