

# Zonke is making the most of her opportunity

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WHEN Zonke Makaula from Soshanguve received a scholarship through the Student Sponsorship Programme while she was at primary school, it was to propel her out of poverty, and she is now shining at Tuks.

The 21-year-old has encouraged pupils who come from low-income homes to apply for the same opportunity, to be awarded the five year scholarship to go to any one of the three top performing schools in the city.

The five-year high school project, which is a non-profit trust called the Student Sponsorship Programme scholarship, was launched in 2000, and it covers tuition, school uniform, sports gear, books and educational excursions.

It has given 1 500 bursaries to deserving pupils across the country, to attend top independent and public high schools, and Makaula, who is now in her final year of BA Administration for International Relations at the University of Pretoria, explained she was an orphan, attending Baxoxele Primary School in Soshanguve when she was encouraged to apply.

She explained that she wouldn't have done it if it was not for her deputy principal, who noticed her academic spirit and fire.

"He took me and others from my class, in the school kombi, to Johannesburg, to take the entrance exam, and I could not believe it when I was told I was the only child accepted, and so off I went to Pretoria High School for Girls."

There she received a lot of



Zonke Makaula, 21, of Soshanguve received a five-year high school scholarship to go to Pretoria High School for Girls and is now a shining star at Tuks.

encouragement: "It was extremely enriching, the staff were very supportive, personally and academic-

ally, and they helped me a lot. It gave me the perfect opportunity to further my academic life.

Makaula said without the scholarship programme financing her high school, she would never have had the chance to become the chairperson of the BA Admin at the university, and through that empowerment hopes to pursue an Honours degree next year.

The scholarship programme's Alexandra Smit-Stachowski said applications were open for gifted youngsters, no older than 12 and in Grade 6, who have marks of 70% for Maths, English and Natural Science.

They will be enrolled in Grade 8 in a city school, either at Pretoria Boys High School, Pretoria High School for Girls or St Alban's College.

The applicants must be keen on sport and want to help the community, and they must have leadership potential.

The combined household income from where they come from must not exceed R20 000 a month, she said.

The scholarship provided recipients with all the support they required. Another example of a Pretoria child who took the opportunity and used it wisely was Melody Dube, who, in 2017, matriculated from St Mary's School for Girls, getting eight distinctions.

Smit-Stachowski also used the example of Thebe Tsatsimpe of the matric class of 2004, who became a Johannesburg Redhill School top alumnus and is now studying at Harvard University.

"If you know of deserving students, please urge them to apply."

Application forms can be downloaded on <https://bit.ly/2t9RSU>, the closing date for applications is August 31.