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SIOC-CDT Bursary Programme Achievement

Compassion drives Reneilwe Ntoahae's passion for Nursing – She completed her Bachelor of Nursing Degree with Cum Laude

For Reneilwe Lethabo Ntoahae, the journey to becoming a qualified nurse is a story of resilience, determination and the passion for community service.

Growing up in the township of Regorogile in Thabazimbi, Reneilwe faced significant health challenges. As a child living with severe asthma, she spent much of her early years in and out of hospital, often uncertain about what the next day would bring. Yet, through these difficult experiences, she developed resilience and a deep appreciation for compassion and quality healthcare.

Surrounded by loving parents, family members, elders and friends, Reneilwe experienced firsthand the meaning of *"motho ke motho ka batho"*, a person is a person through other people. The support she received shaped her values and

strengthened her desire to one day care for others. Her own experiences as a patient, together with the example of family members who are nurses, inspired her to pursue Nursing Science. She became the fourth nurse in her family, determined to make a difference in the lives of people experiencing vulnerability and pain.

A significant part of her journey was made possible through the support of the SIOC Community Development Trust (SIOC-CDT). The bursary eased the financial burden on her family and allowed Reneilwe to focus more fully on her studies. More than financial assistance, the support gave her hope, confidence and motivation to work towards a better future.

Her hard work produced outstanding results. In 2025, she received a Merit Award for her academic achievements and went on to complete her Bachelor of Nursing degree with Cum Laude, from the University of the North West (Mahikeng Campus).

Throughout her studies, lecturers and clinical preceptors provided valuable guidance and mentorship, helping her develop not only academically, but also professionally and personally. Her training strengthened values such as compassion, respect, advocacy, discipline, teamwork and patient-centred care.

Today, Reneilwe is completing her one-year community service and hopes to continue serving the people of Thabazimbi. She aspires to work in her community, advocate for patients and promote health education. In the future, she hopes to specialise in either child nursing or theatre nursing. Her message to young people is simple, "do not allow your circumstances to define your future. With determination, discipline, perseverance and the right support, dreams that once seem out of reach can become reality".

With the many challenges faced by youth in our country, SIOC-CDT stands as a beacon of hope to thousands of young people in beneficiary communities like mine, Thabazimbi. It is important that we embrace opportunities such as the SIOC-CDT Bursary Programme to access quality education and develop valuable skills that will empower us, create opportunities, and open doors to sustainable livelihoods, further said Reneilwe.



A Spark of Light

Learners on SIOC-CDT Scholarship Programme visit their former schools for motivations

Nurturing academic excellence, building confidence and empowering the next generation of leaders to realise their potential and transform their communities. This is at the core of the SIOC Community Development Trust's Scholarship Programme. Launched in 2025, with a cohort of 12, the programme already shines a light of a positive impact. During the September recess, the programme learners from St Patrick CBC in Kimberly, invested some of their time during this break, and visited their former schools to share moments of motivation and encouraged the grade sevens (7) in their schoolwork and wished them well in their coming end-of-year exams. A worthy course for these learners that brought joy to their former educators and learners from their communities. The visited schools were, Deben Primary School, Laerskool Noordkaap in Gamagara and HTT Bidi Primary School in Postmasburg.



EDITOR'S NOTE

Lasting Impact, looking beyond 20 Years

What does it take to restore a learner's dignity, inspire a young person to dream bigger, or help an educator unlock potential? Sometimes, it begins with practical support, an opportunity to learn, or someone who believes in what you can achieve.

As SIOC Community Development Trust (SIOC-CDT) marks 20 years, this edition brings our impact to life through the experiences of people across our beneficiary communities.

From a bursary recipient pursuing her passion for nursing and an apprentice securing employment, to educators strengthening their teaching and learners returning to inspire others, these stories reflect determination, resilience and possibility.

We also highlight how the Kanako Social Responsibility Programme supports learners' dignity and participation in education and share bursary opportunities for 2027.

Looking beyond this milestone, our purpose remains rooted in building resilient communities. These journeys remind us that lasting impact grows when people can develop their abilities, improve their livelihoods and contribute to the wellbeing of others.

As you read, we invite you to celebrate their achievements and consider the possibilities we can create together in the years ahead.

“Stan Plessies is part of the first cohort of SIOC-CDT’s apprenticeship programme that started in 2024 to develop skilled, competent and work-ready artisans by combining theoretical learning with practical, hands-on workplace experience under the guidance of qualified professionals. He is the first ever amongst the group to secure full-time employment before completion of his workplace training and we are delighted about this development”

– Anita Loots, CEO for SIOC-CDT



Photos: Supplied

SIOC-CDT apprenticeship programme, a beacon of hope for the youth

Stan Plessie’s Journey from Adversity to Achievement

Q: Tell us about your background and upbringing.

I grew up in Diepkloof, Olifantshoek, with nine siblings. Life was challenging, as both my parents were unemployed. To provide for us, they started a shebeen, risking arrest just so we could have food. I will forever love and respect them for their sacrifices. Losing three of my brothers was also a painful part of my journey, but I remained determined to succeed.

Q: What inspired you to pursue an electrical apprenticeship?

After obtaining a Diploma in Engineering Technology in Electrical Engineering from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, I pursued an apprenticeship to gain the practical experience I lacked. Electricity had fascinated me from a young age, and working in the mining industry had always been my dream.

Q: What challenges did you encounter during the apprenticeship?

The theoretical and practical assessments were demanding, requiring 100% to pass. I sacrificed weekends to study and learned valuable lessons from second attempts. Our training officers were instrumental in our development.

Q: How did SIOC-CDT support your journey?

SIOC-CDT provided accommodation, meals, training fees, a stipend, tools and transport. This comprehensive support allowed me to focus on learning and developing my skills without burdening my family.

Q: What achievement are you most proud of?

I secured employment before completing my work-exposure programme. After performing the electrical assistant’s duties during my on-the-job training, I applied for the advertised position and was appointed. This was an answered prayer and a proud moment for my family.

Q: What impact do you hope to make in your community?

After obtaining my trade test and wireman’s licence, I hope to help improve electrical safety in schools and hospitals while mentoring young people in technical trades.

Q: Who would you like to thank, and what advice would you give aspiring artisans?

I thank God, my parents, family, church, friends and community, as well as SIOC-CDT, ATI and especially Mr Lesibane, who consistently encouraged me and supported me through my challenges. My advice is to remain humble, patient and committed to mastering your craft. Embrace mistakes as learning opportunities and never stop growing.

From Passion to Purpose

Refiloe Mogotsi’s Journey in Education



Photo: Supplied

Meet Refiloe Mogotsi, a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in English student and teacher at Reenpan Primary School, whose journey reflects the impact of SIOC Community Development Trust (SIOC-CDT) funding on educators and their communities.

Q: Tell us about your journey into education and what inspired you to pursue a B.Ed. in English.

My passion for teaching began many years ago. After working as an administrative and Foundation Phase teacher, I wanted to grow professionally and improve my teaching practice. I pursued a B.Ed. in English to strengthen my teaching methods and help learners develop their communication and reading comprehension skills, particularly during the transition from Grade 3 to Grade 4.

Q: How has SIOC-CDT’s three-year funding support influenced your studies?

The funding has been life-changing. As the sole income earner in my household, I am responsible for meeting our needs and providing financial support. Without SIOC-CDT’s assistance, continuing my studies would have been extremely difficult. The support has allowed me to pursue my qualification and develop professionally.

Q: What key lessons and achievements stand out from your studies?

I have improved my lesson planning, content delivery, teaching methods, conflict resolution and professional relationships. I have also learned how technology, including the smartboard donated to our school, can connect classroom learning to real-life experiences and promote inclusive education.

Q: How do you plan to make a difference in your community?

I want to address literacy challenges, especially reading for meaning and oral presentation. My plans include implementing the Reading to Learn methodology, establishing a reading club, using authentic learning materials and sharing effective teaching practices with language teachers through collaboration and Professional Learning Communities.

Q: What message would you like to share with others from humble backgrounds?

Never give up on your dreams. Embrace opportunities to learn and grow, even when circumstances are challenging. With determination, support and commitment, you can transform your future and make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Refiloe’s journey demonstrates how investing in educators can strengthen teaching practice, empower individuals and create lasting opportunities for learners and communities.

Kanako Social Responsibility, Restoring Dignity and Supporting Learners



to over 3 700 identified female learners across primary, middle and high schools. This intervention is acknowledged to impactfully help reduce absenteeism, restore dignity, and promote menstrual health awareness.

Dignity Packs

In recognition of hygiene as a fundamental need, SIOC-CDT provided 1 288 learners with Dignity Packs personal hygiene kits including soap, deodorant, toothpaste, and sanitary items. These were distributed across all beneficiary communities, with each identified participating school receiving packs for up to 30 learners.

The impact of the Kanako Social Responsibility Programme is visible not just in numbers but in the changed lives of learners who now attend school with confidence, dignity, and motivation. It has Improved school attendance and learner participation and reduced stigmatization of learners from disadvantaged background while boosting learner morale and academic engagement. A further spin-off to this programme is its effort in stimulating local economies through sourcing from community-based suppliers.

Kanako Social Responsibility Programme is a commitment to uplifting communities by ensuring that every learner has a fair chance at success, regardless of their background. As SIOC-CDT continues to walk alongside its communities, programmes like KSR serve as a powerful reminder that dignity and opportunity must go hand in hand.

2026 reach-out to beneficiary schools

The Kanako Social Responsibility (KSR) stands as one of SIOC-CDT's key social investment initiative that responds timely to the everyday needs of learners mostly in the underserved communities across our beneficiary communities in the Northern Cape and Limpopo provinces. In 2026, the programme continued to grow in reach and impact, directly enhancing the learning experience for thousands of learners through essential, dignity-focused support.

KSR was developed as a response to the invisible but deeply felt challenges that learners face i.e. lack of basic hygiene, school supplies, and proper clothing. These issues are often overlooked in formal education strategies but play a critical role in learner confidence, attendance, and participation, and as such if not well addressed, they become serious impediments to the education.

The programme started in 2020 and has since grown from the then school shoes programme to now cover four critical areas of providing full school uniform,

matric exam packs, sanitary towels and dignity packs. Through four key interventions, the programme has touched 95 schools in the beneficiary communities of Joe Morolong, Ga-Segonyana, Gamagara, Tsantsabane, and Thabazimbi.

School Uniform and Stationery Drive

In 2026, over 1 600 learners received full school uniforms, including shoes and basic stationery. Identified schools across all five beneficiary municipality areas benefited from this support.

Matric Exam Packs

Recognising the pressures of matric, SIOC-CDT distributed well over 2 840 exam support packs to Grade 12 learners from 34 high schools this year. Each pack included a calculator, stationery, and exam essentials.

Sanitary Towel Distribution

Quarterly sanitary towel distributions were rolled out



Photo: Supplied

From Struggling Results to Provincial Recognition, Memory Bubu's Journey

High School in the John Taolo Gaetsewe (JTG) District, SIOC Community Development Trust (SIOC-CDT) support has been a catalyst for professional growth and improved learner performance.

Memory began her teaching career in 2010 after relocating from Mpumalanga. Her journey was not without challenges. Between 2011 and 2021, she experienced inconsistent results while adapting to curriculum changes and teaching in a rural community affected by school closures. Despite these difficulties, she remained committed to

improving her practice and helping learners succeed.

A turning point came in 2022 when she enrolled in Stellenbosch University's SIOC-CDT-funded Advanced Diploma in Education (ADE) in FET Life Sciences Teaching (2022–2023). The programme equipped her with new knowledge, teaching strategies and confidence, translating into remarkable improvements in learner performance.

Life Sciences results rose to 87.5% in 2022, 96% in 2023 and an outstanding 100% in both 2024 and 2025. Her learners achieved distinctions and progressed to university studies in fields including Earth Sciences, Nursing, Animal Sciences and Education. In 2024, Memory was recognised as the

province's top-performing Life Sciences teacher from a Quintile 1 rural school.

Determined to continue growing, she pursued a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Science Education (2025–2026), also supported by SIOC-CDT.

Reflecting on the impact, Memory says the university programmes did more than provide qualifications; they transformed her into a more confident, knowledgeable and capable teacher.

Her journey demonstrates how investing in teachers can improve classroom practice, strengthen learner outcomes and open doors to higher education, proving that quality education can thrive in rural communities.



Bursary Programme 2027 Applications Are Open!

SIOC Community Development Trust (SIOC-CDT) invites learners and students to apply for the 2027 bursary programme for post-matric study. This Bursary programme is aimed at supporting the youth from the SIOC-CDT beneficiary communities (Gamagara, Ga-Segonyana, Joe Morolong, Tsantsabane and Thabazimbi) to prepare for an economically sustainable livelihood.

Who can apply:

Only those who are residing in and/or originate from SIOC-CDT beneficiary communities:

- Age of applicant must not be older than 35 years by the closing date of the application
- Accepted/provisionally accepted at the relevant Public Higher Education Institution for 2027 academic year
- In financial need to fund under/postgraduate study with preference given to undergraduates, i.e. combined gross annual household income must not exceed R600 000,00
- National Senior Certificate (NSC) performance of 65% average and above
- People with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Our bursary programme covers:

- Registration and tuition fees
- Accommodation
- Prescribed study material,
- Laptop (once off donation)
- Monthly stipend
- Assistive devices (to enhance learning) for those with disabilities.

Priority Fields of Study for 2027:

QUALIFICATION	SPECIALISATION
Agriculture	• Veterinarian • Livestock product analyst • Environmental officer • Agricultural economist • Agricultural engineer food technologists • Food technicians
Health and clinical related sciences	• MBChB • Pharmacy • Dentistry • Advanced EMS • Nursing • Chemical, Biological, Medical Lab sciences • Biochemistry
Education	• B Ed. FET Mathematics • B Ed. FET Physical science • B Ed. Natural sciences • Economic and Management Science • B Ed. Foundation Phase • B Ed. Language • B Ed. Special Needs
Law	• Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
Tourism	• Hospitality Management • Arts and Culture Heritage • Ecotourism Management
Business management and economics	• Accounting • Economics • Auditing and Tax • Actuarial Science • Statistics and mathematics • Project Management
Engineering and Sciences	• Quantity Surveying • Civil Engineering • Architecture • Geology • Electrical Engineering • Town planning • Environmental health
Information Technology	• Computer Sciences and communication • Software Development • Data Science/Analytics • Web design and development

Relevant supporting documents:

- A certified copy of your South African Identity Document (ID)
- A certified copy of your latest matric results including mid-year Grade 12 results or latest university/academic results where application is for the 2nd year of study onwards
- A certified copy of your final NSC result if completed before 2026
- Proof of acceptance or provisional acceptance or proof of application at a recognized higher public education institution (e.g. University/TVET/FET College in South Africa)
- Recent proof of residence (not older than 3 months)
- Proof of income of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) (most recent payslips) or declaration of unemployment (i.e. sworn affidavit)
- SASSA Grant recipient certificate
- Recent 3 months bank statements
- Medical certificate confirming type of disability (if applicable)

Online application:

<https://duxpd.co.za/sioc-cdt-online-bursary-application-form/>

Manual application:

Visit www.sioc-cdt.co.za to download, or collect the form from our office in Kathu/Thabazimbi or from the nearest circuit office of the Department of Education

Completed applications (hand delivery):

- SIOC-CDT Office Park, Block A, Ground Floor, Cnr Hendrick Van Eck and Ian Flemming Road, Kathu 8446
- SIOC-CDT Thabazimbi Business Hub, 11 Jourdain Street, Mollies Building, Thabazimbi 0380

Contact us:
siocbursary@duxpd.co.za or
WhatsApp: 060 656 1305

Applications Close:
Monday, 30th November
2026 at 12h00 midday

NOTE: Application, shortlisting, interview or provisional selection does not guarantee a bursary award.