



## Nelson Mandela University Medical Students Awarded Prestigious Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation- SAMRC NMU Medical School Scholarship

The SAMRC entered into a partnership with the Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation to build a skilled workforce focused largely on the biomanufacturing sector. This was made possible through a generous donation of the Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation to the SAMRC.

The CSSFF-SAMRC program supports the skills development training of young African scientists through studentships, scholarships (MSc and PhD) and postdoctoral fellowships. In this workstream, the CSSFF in collaboration with the SAMRC has awarded a 6-year grant totaling R6M to the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) to support a cohort of seven (7) Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) students who are both academically and financially deserving. These life-changing scholarships will enable the students to pursue their dreams of becoming medical professionals.

The Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation has recognized the potential and determination of these outstanding scholars, providing them with financial support to overcome the challenges they have faced on their journey to becoming doctors.

Among the recipients is Keagan Brown, a Nelson Mandela University medical student with a fervent desire to make a difference in people's lives. Drawing inspiration from his experience assisting at a day-care centre where his mother worked, Keagan is dedicated to providing comprehensive care for children in need.

Khanyisile Mtsweni, another deserving scholarship recipient, has harbored the dream of studying medicine since her early school days. Her exceptional academic performance and passion for helping others, inspired by her mother's nursing career, have driven her unwavering commitment to pursuing a degree in medicine.

Lukhona Mvovo, a second-year medical student at Nelson Mandela University, passionately believes in providing holistic healthcare to society. Leaving her job in civil engineering behind, Lukhona seeks to become a community-oriented healthcare worker, contributing to the goal of universal access to quality healthcare set forth by the National Health Insurance (NHI) initiative.

Michola Samuels, a first-year medical student, after having completed two years of medical training at a university overseas faced financial setbacks due COVID-19 which affected the financial position of her family and the company that was sponsoring her studies, yet her determination to become a qualified medical doctor has never wavered. Sacrificing and working as a medication packer, Michola aspires to support her parents and pursue further studies in medical law or paediatrics.



Nomcebo Sangweni, also a first-year medical student, has shown exceptional dedication to her academic pursuits despite having experienced extreme financial challenges. With an impressive aggregate in her BSc degree, Nomcebo is driven by her passion for helping those affected by illnesses and aims to specialize in cardiology, focusing on the prevention and treatment of heart conditions.

Noxolo Zulu, whose interest in medicine evolved at a very young age from having witnessed her grandmother's suffering from cancer, believes that the lack of resources and other systemic and structural challenges including variability in skill sets between rural and urban areas in South African public hospitals requires urgent attention. The scholarship will enable her to navigate the challenges of medicine and contribute to overcoming resource limitations in healthcare.

Zintle Mxishi, a first-year student, brings a combination of academic excellence and empathy to her medical studies. Inspired by the compassionate care provided to her brother during his struggle with a life-threatening illness, Zintle is dedicated to preventive medicine and patient education.

The Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation, the South African Medical Research Council and these seven exceptional students share a common goal; to improve the health and well-being of their communities and make healthcare accessible. Each with their unique stories and aspirations, are now one step closer to realizing their dreams, thanks to the support of the Chan Soon-Shiong Foundation and the South African Medical Research Council. The scholarships they have received will not only alleviate financial burdens but also empower them to make a meaningful impact on healthcare and society.

As Nelson Mandela University continues to nurture future healthcare leaders, this funding contribution plays a vital role in shaping the future of medicine and advancing the mission of providing quality healthcare to all, regardless of their background or financial circumstances.