

Mandela Rhodes Scholarship students announced

By [Gabi Khumalo](#)

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For the past 18 years, Chipateni Nyirenda from Lusaka, Zambia, wanted to meet her role model former President Nelson Mandela. Her dream was realised on Tuesday, 4 March 2008, as she, along with 23 students from across the continent, sat next to him to receive her Nelson Mandela Rhodes Scholarship.

The scholarship offering unique educational, mentorship and leadership training opportunities to talented young Africans who display the potential evoked in the document characteristics sought in the Mandela Rhodes scholar.

An elated Nyirenda, 25, relayed to Mandela that when she was seven years old she attended an event where he appeared, but she had been too small to be able to see him.

"I asked my father to lift me up so that I could get a glimpse of you, I'm so excited and inspired by your work and what you are doing for Africa," said Nyirenda.

Nyirenda who is studying BA Honours in International Relations at University of Cape Town said her wish is to become Secretary-General of the United Nations.

"I hope that through this scholarship, doors will open for me to pursue my dream, this is only the beginning," said an optimistic Nyirenda.

Lindokuhle Nkosi from Boschfontein, who is doing her Masters in Social Science and Industrial Psychology, said being selected for the scholarship was not a dream come true but a blessing which she had not anticipated.

"The foundation goes beyond getting financial assistance for us, they also mentor us to become leadership and entrepreneurs," said Nkosi.

For a 22-year-old Zimbabwean Zdena Mtetwa the scholarship has inspired her to achieve more in her life.

"Everyone needs some push, we have an obligation to strive to be the best," said Mtetwa adding that she wanted to encourage the youth to keep going even when they feel like they are in a bush or jungle.

Chairperson of both the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Mandela Rhodes Scholarship Professor Jakes Gerwel said the scholarship was dedicated to building new generation of African leaders.

“When you see the calibre of scholars, you'll realise that there is so much to be optimistic and hopeful about in this country,” said Professor Gerwel.

Nelson Mandela Foundation and Mandela Rhodes Foundation Chief Executive Officer, Shaun Johnson said 67 scholars have benefited from the Rhodes Foundation.

The foundation is aiming to reach 100 scholars by 2010.

The scholarships are open to all students across the African, but courses are taken in South Africa.

The group of students hail from KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape, Gauteng, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Limpopo, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Uganda.

They will be studying in the fields of public administration, music, English literature, business science, social science, economics, physics and computer science, political science and history, French social anthropology, media and communication, biochemistry and nursing science.

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