
QHOLAQHOE MOUNTAIN CONNECTIONS

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August Trip to Qholaqhoe

by Lynn Minderman



My three-week trip to Lesotho in August was marvelous and successful, a joy in every way.

For so many years I have written my yearly newsletter relating the difficulties of life for the students and their families in the mountain villages. This year I want to tell you about the happiness and pride that I saw and felt despite the difficulties.

Qholaqhoe is comprised of eight different villages, each with

its own chief. I walked to the home village of each chief to ask and answer questions, to talk about climate change, the hardships and the successes of farming and herding sheep, goats, and cattle. These conversations were often held in the field where they were plowing or in their ancestral homes where they tend their own vegetable gardens. I feel their pride in children from their village who have graduated from university and have jobs. They also share the problems and frustration of getting a good education for children and how expensive it is to send a child to high school. I talk with villagers who stop me on the road or goat trails to ask about QMC and our scholarship programs. I feel how important our programs are to the lives of these people.

We have amazing help and support on the ground by our Basotho friends. Joseph Lengala, who will become the Principal of Qholaqhoe High School (QHS) in January, is a constant, reliable representative for QMC, supporting college students directly by his presence, friendship, and advice. Tse'pang Matli, QMC Community Representative, has become invaluable helping us build and maintain strong relationships with the people of Qholaqhoe. I spent the entire 3 weeks with her at my side as we walked and traveled to villages talking with people. She has grown up here, knows everyone, is well respected, as is her family. She is the on the ground link we have needed, a true gift for QMC and the Qholaqhoe community we serve.

QMC College Scholarship Program

This year we had 10 applicants for our college program, 5 were accepted into college and awarded a QMC scholarship. There is much happiness in the community and the picture posters of these current and new students have been placed in all chief offices, local elementary and high schools and even the small “shopongs”; cement or corrugated iron shops that sell groceries. The applicant interview videos taken during my trip in August are being shared on our QMC website:

qmconnect.org/college-scholarship-program

We began the college scholarship program in 2016 and have awarded 20 scholarships. Five students have graduated from college. Two of our graduates have been given scholarships by other countries for graduate programs; one by Saudi Arabia for a doctorate in Economics, one by China for a master’s in business. Next year five more students will graduate. We are very proud of these students. They have taken the gift of a scholarship and worked hard to succeed.



New college students and families gather to learn more about their scholarships.

Please see a brief bio and photos of our college students at the end of the newsletter.



QMC High School Scholarship Program

Qholaqhoe High School has struggled with declining enrollment, lack of books, science and math materials and equipment and even suitable classrooms. The school has not been well managed for many years and the atmosphere and moral of the staff has deteriorated. During the last three work trips board members have addressed the problems honestly and clearly with families, school board, community leaders. As a result, the QMC board decided that while we would continue to support current scholarship students at QHS, we would not accept new students starting in January, 2023. We have community support and understanding for this decision.

The parents in the villages that make up the Qholaqhoe Council have led the way in the last three years by placing their children in two other high schools to provide better academic programs. Next school year, January, 2023, we will enlarge our program to include two neighboring schools, St. Charles and Butha-Buthe Community. St. Charles, is about a 30-

minute walk from three Qholaqhoe villages or a 30-minute taxi drive from the other five villages. Many Qholaqhoe village children already attend St. Charles. BB Community is a 30-minute taxi ride and parents have joined together to pay for Qholaqhoe village children to have daily transportation. One of the taxi owners is a village resident and very happy to have this job.

Tse'pang and I visited St. Charles and BB Community to discuss our program with the principals. There was great enthusiasm and appreciation. Both principals said it is painful to turn away parents who want their child to attend high school but cannot afford tuition. They agreed to work with their staff and school board to implement a process. Tse'pang will work with each principal and coordinate with QMC board members so the current sponsor/student communication continues.



St. Charles was opened in 1961 by the Catholic Order of Mercy Nuns. Tse'pang and I were warmly welcome by the principal, Ntate Bulara Thamane and Sister Josephina.

The school receives no financial help from the Catholic Church, but religious education is provided by nuns who also teach other courses. The current school population is 420 students. The school grounds, classrooms, library,

science lab and computer lab are in excellent condition. As we toured the campus, teachers welcomed us, students were busy in classrooms and in the library studying independently and in small groups. It was a very orderly and busy campus. Student academic performance based on national final exams is strong.

Butha-Buthe Community HS., a parent owned school, founded in 1965. The current school population is 800 students. Parents provide financially for the school through student tuition and serve on the school board. The Lesotho government pays the salaries for 28 teachers, and tuition covers the salary of 12 additional teachers needed for math and sciences courses.



We were welcomed by Ntate Lekanyane Moeketsi, principal for the last 20 years. The entire school, classrooms, science and computer labs, campus, are all in excellent condition. The

student academic results on national exams are very good and many students continue with college.

QMC sponsors of QHS students will be receiving a final letter from their student soon. If you would like to have a presentation by one of our QMC board members, please let us know. We enjoy sharing the students and their families.

The children in Qholaqhoe have been able to receive a high school and college scholarship because of your support. Our goal is to continue helping until every current student accepted into our program graduates. Our web site has been updated with videos, photographs and donation forms. www.qmconnect.org



Your Support Is Always Appreciated

We are very excited to be able to expand the college scholarship program by offering five new scholarships this year! Your continued support for QMC and the educational opportunities your donations provide are truly invaluable to providing educational opportunities for these students.

Please consider making a donation to fund our high school and college scholarship programs by clicking on qmconnect.org/donate. You may donate on line or download our printed donation form.

Help us reach our goal of raising \$35,000 this year to continue to offer these important scholarship programs to our Lesotho students.

If you have a friend who might be interested in supporting our programming please consider passing this newsletter on to them. To follow our work, you can subscribe to our newsletter by providing your email at the bottom of the qmconnect.org website.

Your generous donations to our work with the children of Qholaqhoe Mountain are always appreciated.

Thank you!

QMC College Scholarship Students 2022- 2023



Sejhana Sejhana
Lesotho Agriculture College
2nd Year
Agriculture Engineering



Paolosi Tema
National University of Lesotho
3rd year
BA Political Science
Public Administration



Home Mota
National University of Lesotho
3rd year Social Work

2022 Internship: Ministry of
SocialDevelopment, Butha
Butha



Kananelo Bohome
National University of Lesotho
4th year, Social Work

2022 Internship: Apostolic Faith
Mission, foster home in Butha-
Buthe



Mapula Talime
National University of Lesotho
4th year, Social Work

2022 Internship: Apostolic
Faith Mission,



Karabo Tjoobe
National University of Lesotho
5th year, School of Law,

2022 Internship: Taaso
Chambers Law Firm



Moeling Ts'oaenyana
National University of Lesotho
Graduated 2022
Humanities



Itumeleng Lengala
National University of Lesotho
5th year, School of Law

2022 Internship: Mosotho
Attorneys Law Firm, Maseru

New College Scholarship Students 2022 -2023



Labohang Matli
National University of
Lesotho
BA Environmental Health



Tialeng Qabanyane
National University of
Lesotho
BA Science Education



Lebusa Khetsi
National University of Lesotho
BA Science and Engineering



Bongane Mafusing
Lesotho Agricultural College
General Agriculture

Zanele Hanese
Lesotho Agricultural College
Water Engineering