



Linda's Fund

Newsletter January 2025

Celebrating 19 years and 36 bursary students

A Fund for Education in Malawi in Memory of Linda Nelson 1954 – 2006



New students Madalitso and Geoffrey started Motor cycle maintenance courses at Milonga College

Message from the Trustees

This is our eighth Newsletter to everyone who has helped us or expressed an interest in the Charity. Linda's Fund was set up almost 20 years ago in 2006 to improve educational provision for pupils of Mulanje Mission Community Day Secondary School in Malawi, through bursaries and school projects. Girls and boys have equal access to the funds.

The aim of this Newsletter is to show what has been achieved with your help over the last year and what current activities are taking place. Please do let us have any feedback through the website at www.lindasfund.org.uk.

Charity News

We had sufficient funds to start 2 new students in 2024. A further 2 students will be started in 2025 and maybe we will reach 40 students in our 20th year. We were delighted to have been allocated funds from the Pignatelli Foundation which helped us maintain numbers and help students during their industrial placements.

Since the start of Linda's Fund in 2006 36 students have now been awarded bursaries for the following subjects.

Teacher training	1	Hairdressing	1
Electronics	1	Motor vehicle maintenance	8
Bricklaying	4	Plumbing	6
Electrical Installation	6	Accounting	3
Agriculture and Rural studies	2	Public Health	1
Welding	2	Tailoring	1

Details of past bursaries are available on www.lindasfund.org.uk

Students starting in 2024

Madalitso Musewu - Madalitso is 19

Geoffrey Kamwendo - Geoffrey is 19

Both are obtaining industrial placements for experience in 2025.

Students completing in 2024 are

Richard Ned completed his final exams in December. Siphwe has currently not completed her final exams.

We try to assist each student with some start up tools at the end of courses.

Videos of two previous bursaries are included on the website.



Typical Course Costs

Student costs

Medical, safety and equipment	£45 - £150
Computer (2 nd hand if required)	£250
Course fees per term	£140 - £325
Boarding Fee per term	£80 - £120
Exam fees per term	£25 - £50
Startup grant if appropriate	£20 - £70
Tools at end of course	£0 - £75



Teachers houses



Fortrose Hall



School Classroom

School News

Pupil and teacher numbers at Mulanje School have continued to grow and several students have had great success in their exams. Currently there are 742 pupils at the school (343 boys and 399 girls) and 32 teachers.

Malawi

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. The estimated population of 22 million (2025) and is growing at 2.5% a year. The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, which employs over 80% of the population. Malawi's economic situation remains challenging. A severe drought in 2024 has exacerbated macroeconomic imbalances and added to successive poor harvests and high food prices. A government election is due to take place in September 2025.

Mulanje Mission Hospital

Mulanje Mission Hospital is a close friend to Linda's Fund and on our visits we have toured the hospital, joined the Youth Club visits to the community and seen first-hand the fantastic work they do. Further details of their work can be found at www.mmh.mw. A small example of their outreach is shown below from their Newsletter.

Computer lessons at the Youth Centre



△ Interactive computer class at the Youth Centre

Young people and all those young at heart can now improve their computer skills at the Youth Centre. MMH is providing regular lessons but there is also time for practise at own pace. This investment aligns with Malawi's Digital Economic strategy—it is key that young people are able to learn the skills needed for an increasingly digitized economy. Staff at the hospital can also take part in classes. This will improve our mastering of programmes like Word, Excel and PowerPoint and make the work more efficient.

Our website is
www.lindasfund.org.uk



Fundraising

We remained dependent on individual donations during the year plus using the funds from the Pignatelli Trust awarded in 2023. With the 20th anniversary of the school link in 2025 and the start of the bursary fund in 2026 it is hoped to do some additional fund raising during the year. We are able to maintain sufficient funds at the bank again to enable all students who have started to complete their course.

Student Stories

We try to keep in touch with our bursaries. Here are some of their stories.

Bertha Chimwaza was one of our first students. She studied for a certificate in accounting in 2008-2010. Although she didn't complete the final exam she now lives in Blantyre and she recently was in touch about her time at College. "It was indeed useful and I appreciate it. My life has changed because I managed to go to College"

Thomas Paul studied Motor vehicle Maintenance in 2016

Hoping to go to South Africa to get work.



Phyllis Kagola Studied Plumbing in 2020

"I am now a Primary Teacher working with an NGO CAMFED."

Geoffrey Sagawa studied Electrical Installation in 2014

Working at Nchalo Illovo Sugar factory as an electrician. He is married with a daughter." Lindas Fund made me able to support my family and friends. I am happy that you remember me"



Simon Williams studied Bricklaying in 2014

Simon studied bricklaying and also learnt skills training others. He is now running a business as a music producer as well as working on projects requiring his bricklaying skills. He purchased music recording equipment and is training himself. "Thank you for your support which I don't take for granted. I promise you I will work extra hard."

Portia Kunchiwa studied Electrical Installation in 2021

Portia was working in temporary positions initially but "due to inflation many people are looking for food instead of development so contracts are scarce. We are fighting hard to be successful in our work and appreciate Linda's Fund encouragement"



Mulanje Mission Community Day Secondary School



Supporting Local Colleges

One of the main local colleges we have used over the years recently commented as follows:-

"I must acknowledge your effort which you have done over the years to those students whom we have trained here at Milonga Community Technical College. we have received hard working students who came here for a purpose and managed to get what they wanted. Your helping spirit has helped to shape the future of many students." **Lawson Soka MILONGA COLLEGE PRINCIPAL**



Current Bursaries Madalitso and Geoffrey reconditioning motor bikes.

Finances

All UK funding goes to Malawi with no costs in UK (apart from bank charges).

Our yearly expenditure in financial year June 2023/24 was approximately £2000 and income including a large donation in 2023, was £3500 including Gift Aid but excluding the Pignatelli Trust. This has allowed us to cover work experience costs and we now have sufficient funds to increase bursary numbers and ensure there are reserves to allow existing students to complete their courses.

Linda's Fund is run by a small group of volunteers. The Fund has charity status in the UK and over the years has distributed over £76,000. This money has been raised by generous donations from individuals, sponsored events, pupils fundraising, company donations and The Pignatelli Trust. Without this support and the help from the Mission School committee we could not continue to support our bursary students. The link between Fortrose Academy and Mulanje Mission continues and is supported in both communities.



Finally

Thank you for your interest in the charity, and its work in Malawi that is helping to improve education in one of the many community schools and giving opportunities and hope to students and their families. We can only make small steps but for each individual it can be life changing.

If you wish to make a donation to the Fund this can be done from the Donations page on our website at www.lindasfund.org.uk

Or by post to

The Treasurer

Linda's Fund

Fortrose Academy

Academy Street

Fortrose

IV10 8TW

Left over holiday Currency?

Donate it to Linda's Fund at

<https://www.leftovercurrency.com/charity/lindas-fund/>