

Fall 2021 Update Letter:

New Seattle Student Committee

With a new school year underway in Seattle, our student committee has been hard at work recruiting new members and making big plans to achieve SSASF's fundraising goals for the year. Here is a report from one of the group's leaders:

Why I am a part of SSASF

Hi! My name is Caroline, and I am one of the student co-presidents of SSASF. I am a freshman at Bishop Blanchet High School, and I am so excited to be helping with SSASF this year! The main reason I'm a part of SSASF is that I value education, and I know that everyone should be able to reach their full potential. This is also why I appreciate SSASF so much because it allows our scholars to do just that! I also love that I am making a difference outside of my community and expanding my ability to impact someone's life. Being co-president this year is also showing me some important leadership and organizational skills. Lastly, knowing that I'm helping someone reach their goal and eventually contribute back to their community is something I am so thankful for!



What we have planned for the upcoming year

This upcoming year is going to be very exciting. On October 30th, we hosted a bake sale at Ken's Market in Queen Anne (special thank you to them!), and we raised over \$1,200! We are in the process of brainstorming for a Thanksgiving fundraiser, and we already have so many ideas for Christmas season fundraising. In the spring we plan to have another walkathon as that was extremely successful last year! I am so excited for this year and to see how far SSASF will go!

End of Year Fundraising Ask (Giving Tuesday prep)

SSASF needs your help! In addition to housing support, tuition, and other kinds of gap funding, we have made it a priority to help our students stay connected and in school through the Covid-19 pandemic. Education in South Africa has been impacted in a major way by the pandemic, which we will cover later in this newsletter. Despite those numerous challenges, all of our scholars have been able to continue their studies safely through the pandemic. This was in no small part due to your contributions to SSASF.

We are so grateful for the support you have given us in the past, and now we must ask for your help again. The impacts of the pandemic are still high in South Africa. Our scholars' needs are still present, and unless we are able to raise at least \$5,000 by the end of 2021, we will not be able to offer a scholarship to any new scholars this year. Please consider helping us continue to offer meaningful and life-changing support to the next generation of scholars from the Hector Peterson School in Cape Town, South Africa.

We have included several ways to give in the back of the newsletter. November 30th is right around the corner, so please consider joining Giving Tuesday's 13.5 million other donors and supporting SSASF on this international day of generosity!

Seeking introductions and connections for grant applications

As you may have gathered, our coffers have run pretty dry after over a year and a half of the Covid-19 crisis. To maintain our commitments to our scholars and to continue to offer substantive, direct impact on the lives of bright youths in Cape Town, South Africa, SSASF is seeking to diversify our funding streams. If you are connected to a grant-writing organization or foundation that values education, supports initiatives in Africa, wants to foster unique extracurricular experiences for local students, or is just looking for grantees who can maximise impact per dollar spent, please refer them to our website or introduce us through info@ssasf.org!

COVID-19 impacts on education in South Africa

Throughout the pandemic, we have been hearing from our SSASF scholars about how COVID-19 is presenting them with extra burdens and obstacles. Like students all over the world, our SSASF scholars have needed to pivot from in-person classes to online learning - occasionally multiple times within a school year in the face of rolling lockdowns. In South Africa, with "pay as you go" data plans being the norm, our scholars have needed extra funds to access their lessons and course materials. Prices for basic necessities have also risen, with food, transportation, and housing costs all going up. Despite these challenges, SSASF's scholars have persevered. Though per UNICEF, the average learner in South Africa is between 75 percent and a full school year behind where they should be due to the impact of disrupted education since the COVID-19 outbreak, without exception our scholars have continued their degrees at a pre-pandemic pace (1). While "an estimated 750,000...may have dropped out as a result of the pandemic," our scholars have found support in their network of fellow SSASF students and alumni (2). SSASF is committed to supporting our scholars as much as our limited resources allow. Though our mission has historically involved bridging gaps for scholars already receiving external assistance, it has proven critical during the ongoing pandemic. Data for online learning or meal support while residence halls are closed can and does make the difference between educational advancement and deferral.

1. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/learners-south-africa-one-school-year-behind-where-they-should-be>
2. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/south-africa-children-school-drop-out-covid-19/>

How to Support SSASF

Due to the pandemic, we have been providing an increased level of support to each Scholar in order to ensure they're able to stay connected to their courses and classmates. We need your support, now more than ever, in order to ensure our Scholars are able to succeed.

We ask you to consider the following ways to support SSASF's work:

- Sign up to receive future communications via email -- you'll receive future update letters and event invites in your inbox and help us save on printing and stamp costs! Please go to [this link](#) to opt in to emails from SSASF -
- If you shop on Amazon, set up Amazon Smile and select SSASF as the beneficiary -- 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases will be donated for every purchase you make at smile.amazon.com!
 - To sign up, log in to your Amazon account and navigate to smile.amazon.com. Click "Get Started" then search for Seattle South African Scholarship Foundation. Click "Select" and you're all set up!
 - Since purchases only count if they're made via smile.amazon.com, browser plugins (like *Smile Always* on Google Chrome or *Amazon SMILE!* on Firefox) are available that will automatically load Amazon URLs via smile.amazon.com
 - If you prefer to shop via Amazon's mobile app, it's still possible to have your purchases counted for Smile donations
 - Follow the instructions above on a web browser, as it is currently not an option to sign up for Smile via the app
 - Once you've selected SSASF as your charity of choice, open the app and find "Settings" in the main menu (☰)
 - Tap on "AmazonSmile" and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone
 - We would so appreciate if you could encourage your friends and family to also sign up! Every donation helps SSASF continue to support Scholars in South Africa
- Make a financial gift to SSASF
 - A gift of \$200 covers most annual administrative costs so that SSASF can continue operating
 - A gift of \$450 covers the cost of a laptop, required by many Engineering programs
 - A gift of \$700 covers internet costs for 3 months for all the Scholars
 - A gift of \$1000 covers an average of 4 months rent so a Scholar can live near campus, reducing transportation costs and other access barriers
 - Gifts can be mailed to SSASF, PO Box 9633, Seattle, WA 98109
 - Donations can be made via PayPal funds, debit or credit card via <http://www.ssasf.org/donate/>
 - SSASF is also able to accept donations of stock, please contact the Board Treasurer for more information at luke@ssasf.org
 - If your employer matches gifts, please be sure to submit your donation!
- Help us connect to other sources of funding -- know someone involved in a Rotary chapter? We'd love to be introduced!