

Letter from Catherine Mathe, a Magdalene Scholarship Fund Awardee



February 10, 2010

My name is Catherine Mathe. I am 19 years of age and currently registered with the University of Johannesburg, studying Accounting (2nd year). I am a young woman who is very determined, goal-orientated, and hardworking. I always try to reach my maximum potential.

I grew up in Alexandra and was raised in a family of 7 siblings by a single parent who was unemployed. I attended primary school at Bovet. At the age of 9 (in grade 4) I was one of the learners chosen to be awarded a scholarship from the Magdalene Scholarship Fund. My school fees and school uniforms were paid for until I matriculated from high school in 2008. I appreciate every little effort that was invested in me.

I have been motivated to work hard because I know that many other children are deprived of their rights to an education.

Growing up in Alexandra has really been a challenge for me, and for every other young person who has been raised and lives there. We face a lot of socio-economic problems. Young people here are forced to make decisions between right and wrong on a day-to-day basis just to survive. I am very fortunate to have made it this far. Lots of my peers have dropped out of school because they had to focus on survival. Along the way I made the decision that I'd rather endure the pain of poverty and rejection than leave school. I am determined to secure a great future for me, the children I may have some day, and the future generation. I always aspired to attend university, even when I had nobody to pay my fees. God answered my prayers.

People say, "The fragrance stays in the hand that gives the rose." That is true. More blessed is the hand that gives than that receives. I thank God for the scholarships I have received. You are not only helping me but the entire community of Alexandra. I believe that I am also going to be a blessing not to my family only but to the rest of South Africa. I would like to thank you for all the school fees that have been paid on behalf of my classmates and me. Because of you, our small bodies never went cold because we got school uniforms and jerseys. Thanks to you, we felt motivated to wake up every morning and go to school, knowing that nobody would notice that we came from poor families. We thank you for everything that you have sacrificed to see to it that we have the opportunity to learn.

I pray to God that He helps everyone who has helped us through the scholarship fund. May His Grace and Mercy be upon you all forever.

Catherine