

## REFLECTIONS THE SHELBY DAVIS VISIT

### Teaching Staff:

#### **John Storer (Director of Admissions and University Advisor at Waterford)**

I think one of my highlights was when Shelby was brought to tears by the quote from Tema Shongwe (Eswatini, WK 09-15) – because of what she said and because she is at Wellesley – one of the original Davis schools closest to his heart. This wrapped up the Q&A session with the IB students which he enjoyed and was very eye-opening to the students in many respects! Here is what Tema had written:

*"I treasure my Waterford education because it instilled in me a passion for helping to shape a better world. Now, as an Economics & French double-major at Wellesley College, a fellow in Secretary Madeline K Albright's Institute for Global Affairs a future leader in my own country, I continuously ask myself: what can I learn from all my experiences here in the US and how can I use that to help shape a more peaceful and sustainable future for the kingdom of Eswatini. It is through your generosity that I am even able to have such invaluable experiences that are enabling me, a young Swati woman, to grow in knowledge and in confidence. Thank you for investing in me, my future and in the future of Eswatini. May God continue to bless you!"*

#### **Fiona Mills: (CAS Director at Waterford)**

The Davis party visited Sobhiyozo Preschool with a group of IB1 students on Monday and participated in the Commserve we do there each week. They thoroughly enjoyed their time with the children and the students and there was a great deal of laughter and fun during the session. We discussed the service programme and I shared some reflections with them that the current IB2 students had recorded on their blogs. Shannon Borrel wrote about the Girls Focus Group,

*"Through this Commserve project I have learned that just because someone may hold a set of beliefs that seem counterproductive to my ideal image of empowerment and emancipation; their own thoughts about the kind of strength they want to have in their own lives and how they intend to achieve it, are no less important or effective than my own."*

Sara Christensen reflected in answer to the question, what is one experience you will cherish for the rest of your life?

*"This entire experience! Wow. Had it not been for the people at Waterford, my experiences every day, and especially with CAS this experience would not have been as grand or as mind-blowing. There are people here from all over the world, and wow, I cannot believe that I have had the opportunity to teach soccer to girls in Eswatini*

*alongside a South African, a Dutch student, a British student, a Kenyan student and a Vietnamese student. This not only blows my mind every day, but UWC and all it brought with it is something I will remember and cherish for the rest of my life. "*

It is clear that the spirit of Waterford lies in the interactions of students with each other the staff and the community around them. Our desire as a school and a community to give back and to try and make a difference is at the heart of much of what we do.

### **Polycarp Wekesa (Director of Residences)**

My highlight was during Shelby Davis' session with UWC alumni and recipients of the Davis UWC Scholars Programme based in Swaziland and/or working in Southern Africa, who turned up to meet him. It was wonderful to listen to the inspiring stories by alumni and how they are playing a revolutionary role in changing the world.

Bantu Mabaso (Swaziland, WK 07-13) shared how she used a Davis Project for Peace Grant to build a learning centre for new farming practices in Eswatini. Many of the alumni shared what they are currently doing. For instance, Thulani Tsabedze, a Robotics Engineer (Swaziland, WK 08-09) is working with a group of medical students working to develop the cervical cancer screening device.

All the alumni thanked Shelby Davis in person for investing in them and how the programme opened for them the opportunity to discover the possibility of change through courageous action, personal example and selfless leadership.

### **Mancoba Mabuza (Communications & PR Officer at Waterford)**

"What a great human being! Shelby had this lovely smile as he stepped on Waterford campus and greeting everyone – a smile that kept broadening with each person he met. It was an honour to be part of the team that coordinated the Shelby programme and moving with him from place to place was quite fascinating. For me the highlight was seeing him play with the kids at Sobhiyozo preschool in a local community – that picture will be etched in my mind for years to come! His love for humanity and the world is written all over his face and that is why I think that Shelby embodies what UWC stands for."

### **Students:**

#### **Lindani Khoza (IB1)**

"My highlight of Shelby Davis' visit was having the opportunity to escort him onto the WK campus. Upon arrival he exclaimed, "Wow, you guys really know how to say hello!" He's a man with a jolly smile and a jolly heart, not to mention a sense of humor! Something I took away from his visit is how kindness has the ability to bring about positive change. Being part of UWC, I may not be able to change the world, but

through kindness, I can change the worlds of those around me. That's what really matters."

**Simphiwe Lukhele (Form 5)**

"I really liked Mr Shelby Davis' assembly speech; it had some valuable lessons for us as students. I can still vividly remember his key message: learn, earn and return!"

**Lindelwa Ntshakala (Form 2)**

"Having lunch and dinner with Shelby Davis was quite interesting because he told us a lot about himself and how he started the Davis UWC Scholars Programme. He basically emphasized the importance of giving back to society."

**Gciniwe Simelane (IB1)**

"Picking a single moment to describe as my key moment of Shelby Davis' visit was harder than believing he was actually coming. Looking back on the assembly, the dinner, the Q&A session and even the concert I realize that my favourite moment was getting to put a face to the amazing acts of service. I am just so grateful to have met and learnt from a man who truly embodies the UWC mission statement. Shelby Davis truly makes education a force to unite people."