People can either be a great asset or a great liability to an organisation. We’re in the privileged position of having 50 employees who we believe are great assets to the work of the Foundation and can be greater still once their potential has been joined with the potential of others within the team and/or our partners. Much of the work of the Foundation is about changing the lives of those in Zithulele and the surrounding communities, but we cannot do that unless we have a great team. And we do!

This month we hired employee number 150, which makes our current staff complement total 50. This suggests a high turnover of staff, but we have been around 10 years this year too. We have had some short term roles for meeting specific needs, and in the past we did have a high turnover of staff in our translator category especially but we have worked hard to increase the variety of experiences that it affords employees to gain, as well as working hard to increase the salary for this position, making it a more viable long term role to hold. As a result, our turnover has decreased significantly and we now have a really solid staff base.

People do come and go though. While we are always sad to see people move on, we are encouraged that we have been able to provide people with opportunities and skills that have led them to take the next step; whether that be moving into a more advanced role outside of Jabulani or moving on to study because their work with us has helped them realise that they have the potential to give so much more. From Lulamile who has been a faithful employee for many years, first as a translator and then as a Pharmacy Helper in the ARV team who has now moved onto a role within the Department of Health at Zithulele Hospital (and who can be found around the place when his successor needs to ask his advice with something), to Sidumise who is going back to school at the end of this month to improve her matric with the hope of moving into teaching and one day coming back to teach at our local government school, from Fundiswa who started as a volunteer then worked her way up through Jabulani and is now a qualified Basic Pharmacy Assistant working for the Department of Health, to Siphe who moved on to do nursing, Mzimasi who went to Cuba to study medicine, Lwandile who went to Johannesburg to do his Diploma in Engineering…the list is long!

Over the years, we’ve invested in our staff where funds and opportunities have allowed but we work in very diverse teams and we realised we were missing a vital component – getting the entire workforce together for some professional and personnel development, with the added bonus of getting people to spend time with colleagues whose paths they may otherwise never cross. On the 16th of June, we held our first full Jabulani team development day (to which some wore school uniform in recognition of Youth Day). We had to use a public holiday as it would otherwise be impossible to pull everyone from the jobs they do – we can’t leave kids in school without teachers or patients in the hospital who need support!

It was a fantastic day together, covering professionalism, attitudes, and being an influencer in your sphere of influence. People had the opportunity to explore these seemingly simple but actually quite complex topics in some depth, interacting with different people for each session. Ironically, the exercise that felt like it held the most risk of disappointing during the planning of the event, that of each group making lunch for another group, led to a lot of fun and friendly competitiveness as each team practiced their team work and communication skills while working to impress those whom they would be feeding! We thought that some photos of this day would be a good opportunity to introduce you to our full team. Although we usually profile a colleague in each edition of the newsletter, that’s only four per year and we have many more great people to show off!
1. Shannon Morgan – Rural Ability Programme Coordinator
2. Tabisa Hlalendlini – Community Disability Worker
3. Anathi Jindela – Livelihoods Coordinator
4. Zonke Banjwa – ARV/TB Counsellor
5. Putumani Fatsha – ARV Prepack Team Assistant
6. Simlindile Ngqelakhe – Translator/Pharmacy Helper
7. John Young – General Manager
8. Lulamile Danile – previous ARV Pharmacy Helper
9. Catherine Young – Operations Manager
10. Asipe Swana – ARV Pharmacy Helper
11. Chwayita Sogoni – ARV/TB Programme Coordinator
12. Masixole Namate – Community Disability Worker
13. Matilda Ashford – Project Trust Volunteer ARV/ TB
14. Thandeka Xakaza – Pre-school Principal
15. Bethany Aird – Project Trust Volunteer ARV/ TB
16. Malibongwe Ntlaninge – Healthy Village Project Assistant
17. Asisipho Mbiza – Cleaner
18. Xolisa Chirwa – Pre-school Teacher
20. Sandisiwe Mboleni – Translator
22. Sweetness Mpontshane – Translator
23. Ntombifuthi Dyongosi – Community Disability Worker
24. Usapha Mtambeka – Translator
25. Sandi Tshemese – Jump Start mentor & Translator
26. Thandiwe Matshaya – Translator
27. Wonga Mpanana – Building Services assistant
28. Lethu Nqineka – Translator
29. Neli Banjwa – Administrator
30. Mbuso Kabalaza - Building Services Assistant
31. Sidumise Qwase – TB/ARV Counsellor
32. Ntombi Mfundisi – Pharmacy Helper
33. Notandekile Valuvalu – Garden Monitor
34. Lindeka Mbanga – Pre-school Assistant
35. Erica Burger – Education Coordinator
36. Lydia Mgchwaba – ECD in the Home Community Worker
37. Ayanda Parafini – Translator
38. Buzeka Nkanunu – Community Disability Worker
39. Nosakhiwo Blayi – Community Disability Worker
40. Liaan Marais – Building Services Manager
41. Phelisa Memeza – previous Librarian
42. Minikazi Mabola – Pre-school Teacher/ECD in the Home Community Worker
43. Athini Mbono – Translator
44. Siwe Mahlanyana – Pre-school Teacher

Not featured here: Thandiwe Mhlaba – ARV/TB Counsellor; Buyiswa Speelman – ARV/TB Data Manager; Nomonde Sicengu – Clerk Assistant; Lindikaya Tyontsi – Switchboard Assistant; Luxolo Matebese – Translator; Asimen Magila – Translator; Asipe Dlentele – Healthy Village Assistant; Nosiphiwe Magadule – Community Disability Worker; Nelisa Ntoyaphi - Translator
Another exciting event that took place in this past quarter was a joint Management and Board Vision and Planning session. The impetus behind this was that Jabulani has now been in existence for 10 years. We have initiated, partnered with, or supported a number of diverse projects through health, education, the environment and community development. But we wanted to relook at who we are and why we are doing what we’re doing, in order to be strategic and intentional about how we move forward into the next 10 years. This two day session was facilitated by Grant Edkins from Ethembeni in Kwa-Zulu Natal (see www.ethembeni.co.za), who has significant experience from which we could learn. It was amazing to see where we’ve come from, what progress has been made and from that, where we’re hoping to go in the future is starting to take shape, although this will be a work in progress.

We are always grateful for the role that you, our supporters, play in partnering with us and therefore enabling us to do what we’re here in Zithulele and the surrounding communities to do. Most often our supporters have come via a personal link or through being inspired by the work of Jabulani, but given where we’re situated, it is not always possible for you to get a sense of who we are. We recently had a suggestion from one of our ‘Friends of Zithulele’ newsletter readers, that it would be beneficial for us to showcase our staff. We hope that by reading this newsletter you have a better idea of who makes up this team that, through you, have been employed to impact the lives of the many whom we have, and continue to reach, through our various programmes and services. Thank you for trusting us with your money. Thank you for your prayers. Thank you for showing an interest in us. Thank you for being part of our great team.

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