

Vice-Chancellor, I have the honour to present, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, Lynda Chalker.

In 1994, *The Economist* ^[1] posed a question: Which two British politicians are most well known outside of Britain?

The clues were: (1) John Major is not one of them (remember this was 1994) and (2) they are both women. The first, of course, was Margaret Thatcher, and the second was Lynda Chalker.

On the 10th of January 1986, she was sworn in as Minister of State for Africa & the Commonwealth and, just two weeks later, was off on a very hectic tour: Kenya, Tanzania and then Uganda. Her only previous experience of Africa had been a 4 day visit to Mauritius – so she was engaging her new constituency with gusto.. She held continuous government office for eighteen years (1979 to 1997) and was created Baroness Chalker of Wallasey in 1992.

Since then, she has been pursuing her vision that economic development in Africa is the key to its freedom. She is a trustee of the University of Cape Town Trust and Chair of Medicines for Malaria. She also founded the Chalker Foundation, which supports medical knowledge and training in Africa.

As Overseas Development Aid (ODA) Minister Lynda Chalker secured funding to support bursaries at UCT more than 25 years ago. She has continued to raise funds that have been used for bursaries for disadvantaged students at UCT. The UCT Trust alone has raised over R180 million in the last 20 years. But let me tell you some stories about the recipients of those bursaries:

Aa-iesha Gabriel is a doctor. She qualified in 2006 and did her community service at Khayelitsha Day Hospital. She always wanted to be doctor, partly for her own fulfilment, but also so that she could make a difference by helping people. Right now, she's working in Obstetrics at Somerset Hospital.

Bulenlani Madondile is an opera singer. His mother was a domestic worker and his father worked for 28 years as a carpenter at the Snowflake flour mill in Woodstock. He says: "I was born to sing", but his parents weren't convinced that he could make a career out of music. But he has. Right now, he's rehearsing for the UK tour of the *Magic Flute* and has already sung in *Così fan Tutte*, *Tosca* and *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Dinesh Jugmohan is an investment banker. He grew up in rural Verulam, in Kwazulu Natal, and both his parents are teachers. When he was a child, his parents encouraged him with mathematical games and Dinesh eventually chose to study actuarial science. Right now, he's doing financial advisory work for infrastructural projects such as windfarms and solar developments.

All of these students were funded by bursaries whilst they were at UCT. The bland statement "funded by bursaries" translates into Aa-iesha being able to live out her dream of being a doctor, Bulelani being able to use his incredible voice on the stage and Dinesh being able to say: "if it wasn't for that scholarship, I wouldn't be where I am now".

And of course there are also the stories of Rofhiwa, who studied Electrical Engineering; Vivek, who did an MBChB; Lulama who did Business Science; Naseeba, who's doing a Masters in Material Science and Nerson, who's now doing Clinical Research ...

Vice-Chancellor, I have the honour to invite you to admit to the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, Lynda Chalker.

1. *The Economist*, Votes in aid (British Foreign Aid). **1994**. 30 July 1994).