

SPOTLIGHT ON...

MACDONALD CHIRARA

Following their experiences with Young Scientists for Africa (YoSA) and the London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF), our students go from strength to strength, developing their passion for science and benefiting their African communities. A perfect example of this is 2019 YoSA Clare Elwell Scholarship winner, Macdonald Chiara, from the small town of Marondera in Zimbabwe. In his developing community, STEM subjects are yet to receive the status they deserve, meaning this gifted student earned himself a once in a lifetime opportunity with YoSA.



Macdonald was introduced to YoSA by fellow Zimbabwean alumni, Tonyaradzwa 'Tonya' Chivandire. As a result of her experiences in the UK, she also continues to succeed in science in Africa. Tonya was Macdonald's teammate at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Their partnership is testament to the strength of YoSA and LIYSF in creating long-lasting bonds based on scientific study and discovery.



"Being selected as the flag bearer of my country at the opening ceremony of LIYSF was one of the greatest honours that has ever been bestowed upon me. Over the two weeks, I attended incredible lectures from some of the world's leading professors and visited some of the most exclusive and prestigious research labs that I had only seen on TV or read about in books."

Prior to attending LIYSF, Macdonald's impressive résumé boasted multiple prestigious awards, including the 'SNV Netherlands Development Organisation Green Innovation Award' and 'The Society for Science and Public Community Innovation Award'. Both were won for his 'Smart Household' portable system, which uses any organic waste to generate electricity and cooking gas (biogas) – a particularly important innovation in his poorly-resourced home setting.



During the Forum, Macdonald was introduced to a world of interdisciplinary and collaborative science, with different cultures and traditions meeting, often for the first time. He was chosen to profile his research, titled 'Electricity from Water Hyacinth Enhanced Biogas Production' at LIYSF's FameLab session. Macdonald explained that this experience was essential for his personal and professional development; he came away with new skills to concisely present his science to a general audience. Using these skills, he later re-presented his project and won first-place in the 'Remote Poster Competition – Physical Science Category' of the 'Young Scientist Journal'.

Additionally, with the support of SNV GIHUB Phase III Project, Macdonald has also dedicated his exceptional talents to working on a social enterprise called 'Everlasting Technology'. This enterprise aims to create green communities by providing novel, renewable energy solutions and by introducing technologies which positively impact the environment.



Recently, Macdonald received a scholarship to continue his studies at the prestigious Africa Leadership Academy, in South Africa. The program is geared toward young African leaders with the potential to catalyse positive change on the continent. At the end of the program, Macdonald plans to study Biomedical Engineering. By using his passion for the integration of technology into the healthcare sector, this young scientist's ultimate goal is to improve the quality and effectiveness of patient care in his African community.

"YoSA is giving the platform and opportunity for African students to be exposed to a global scientific environment. I believe Africa's future lies in the hands of its scientists."