

*Where are they now?*

Thabo joined CITW in 2011, and since we met him he has dreamed of being “a doctor of animals.” He first participated in CITW Eco-Clubs at Boxahuku Primary School and attended an annual CITW Camp at Pafuri in Kruger National Park (KNP). Boxahuku Primary School is one of four primary schools where we host CITW Eco-Clubs in the Makuleke Villages bordering the KNP. He showed genuine wildlife and environmental interest and as such, was invited to participate in a Save the Elephants initiative at Pafuri with Dr Michelle Henley – Programme Manager of Save the Elephants at the time (today the programme is called Elephants Alive).



He attended N’wanati High School where he created an Eco-Club with his peers in his village of Mabiligwe in Limpopo, South Africa. They called it “SuperKids to Save the Environment” and the group have subsequently joined the CITW Youth Environmental Stewardship (YES) programme in Makuleke. He joined a CITW YES Camp in 2016 at Pafuri Trails where his environmental and conservation studies continued.



Never forgetting his dream of becoming a wildlife veterinarian, Thabo had the opportunity to spend two weeks with South African National Parks (SANParks) Veterinary Wildlife Services in the KNP in 2016. In Thabo’s words: “One of my highlights was working in the lab, wearing a lab coat and gloves; this made me feel like my dreams come true. My biggest highlight was working with the veterinary wildlife team; the experience that I have obtained from them has made a very big difference in my life”.

What’s wonderful about Thabo’s story is that it just keeps getting better! He matriculated from high school at the end of 2017 with a Bachelor’s pass. He is now following his passion of working with animals, and has started his internship at the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre.

Thabo is doing very well here at the centre. He was appointed as a general assistant to the canine unit which involves working with the dogs. His day starts early with feedings, then he needs to help around the kennels and walks the dogs when they are not on duty. He has a strong bond with the dogs and the staff that work with him enjoy it as he is a lovely person to be around.

We look forward to watching Thabo’s progress. He is a shining example of the vision of Children in the Wilderness coming to light – to develop sustainable conservation through leadership development. Keep it up, Thabo – we are so proud of your commitment, energy and passion for conservation!

