

My name is Simelwe Dlova and my daughter Asiko and I would like to thank everybody who made coming to EMU and then going to Goshen College possible. We arrived here in Harrisonburg Wednesday 13th of August and have felt at home since then. I don't know how to express how grateful I am right now for your help, your prayers, and support but I do know that I can ask God to be with you all in whatever you do and bless you abundantly.

When Anna mentioned applying for Goshen College in 2007, I was excited and thought it would be the coolest thing ever, it did not work and I was very disappointed but God had a plan and his plan did not include leaving my family at the time. But when she mentioned it again in 2012 saying we should try for August that year, it sounded too good to happen to me. I was reluctant in saying yes we can try and even then I did not think it was the greatest idea ever. I remember we were on the car going to town and I remember where about we were when she mentioned it, finally I agreed to try for maybe May 2013. Then in June I started thinking different, because there were a lot of things that I thought I had to do but found out there were other alternatives. First I did not have to pay application fee and found out that instead of taking a TOEFL I could do an Intensive English Program at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg where I am right now.

So Anna had a plan and this is a testimony that if you ask God for something and He wants you to have it, He will work things in His own way. So while Anna was busy fundraising I was kind of scared and not sure if I should be doing something and maybe a little embarrassed. So again May did not work and things were slow and then we went for August 2013 but at this point in my experience I knew that God wanted to work things His own way and I trusted that. Then I had to go for my Visa interview, I did my research and almost had everything required but it all started with the security guys at the embassy telling us that we should go wait somewhere else and come back at 8:15am and so when we came back there was already a long cue, what they did not mention is that you can also just wait in the cueing area so that you can maybe be the first one to go in as I wanted to. I was already nervous at that point and then found out that there were other things that we were supposed to pay for that we did not. When I got to the interview room I answered every question and then the guy pulled out a paper and just told me that unfortunately our visas cannot be approved because I do not have proof of ties to my country. I walked out and by then I was already shaking and because I had everything I needed to bring and I had triple checked I did not know what he meant by proof of ties. So we went back home broken hearted. We knew that we might have to do it twice anyway but on the ride back home I thought of how Anna had worked hard to get to this point and everybody's effort to make this work and that it would just take one person to decide I can't get the Visa. By then



I did not think trying again would help and did not think we should but Anna had not given up and it is her faith in me that has brought me this far. The lady at window 2 called us back before we left the building for a refund and she told me that I should ask Anna to go in and talk to the guy and maybe she will get a different response and she did, she found out that it was not the proof of ties that made him refuse us the visa but that is what they tell everybody when they refuse them the visa, by then he was not my favorite guy and I did not understand why they would do that when they could just be honest with you.

Second time we applied and went for the interview I thought the least I can do is do everything they did not tell me that day and I was determined to be the first person to get an interview. Well, I tried but when we got to the consulate office I was maybe the 3rd person and that kind of made me angry a little bit because I was really the first. When I was sitting there waiting for my turn I had a little prayer and I said "you know what God, if there is one tiny place in me that still believes this could work please help me believe in it because right now with all what I've heard I don't have much faith" when my turn came, I had just closed the door when the interview guy just went on and apologized for refusing me the visa last time and how he could see that I had good intentions and that my image had been on his mind for a long time, how he was glad I applied again. He then said so I don't want you to worry about anything now we're good, let me just go ahead and approve these. He took my finger prints and said good luck with your studies and please apologize to your friend for me. I was in awe. I was close to crying and had tears ready to burst out. I could've recorded that so that even if there is nothing I can remember anymore I have it to replay it. I am grateful for the lady at window 2 and now my favorite guy at window 1. I am grateful for everyone who worked with Anna for fundraising. To Jacob for the website, thank you so much. To everybody who shared and posted the website on their wall thank you, I saw my face a lot on facebook the past few months. To Anna and Joe's entire family thank you for everything.

To Anna and Joe who I now find it hard to live far from because I can't just walk to the kitchen and ask for her advice, Thank you for believing that I could still dream and live that dream. Thank you to EVERYONE who made this possible, you did not do this for just me, you did it for every young woman in South Africa who believes that greatness is something they can't have because the truth is that we all need a hand in some ways.

God bless you.

If you would like to contact me for anything my email address is simdlova4@gmail.com and my phone number is 574-849-2857.

