

It is not easy at times to start a life at a foreign university. But with good assistance, it is very easy to break through and achieve your dream. This year, we share testimonies of students who went to various parts of the world, to start their academic journeys. This might inspire you, or offer you guidance, on crafting your own journey.

CHINA EXPERIENCE

By Fazio Kasule

I am delighted to write about my experience in China as a student. After graduating from Makerere University, my next step was to enroll for a master's programme in China.

Within a few months after paying the processing fees and doing all the paperwork, I received an admission letter from Hebei University of Technology (HEBUT) in China, saying I was granted a full scholarship that covered both tuition and accommodation for two-and-a-half years.

I was so happy when I heard the good news.

HEBUT is the biggest and best university in Hebei province located in Tianjin city not far from Beijing which is the capital of China.

On August 28, 2015, I flew to Peking Airport in Beijing. I was connected by the university's Uganda attaches who picked me from the airport and took me to the school where I received a warm welcome from the university administration.

The writer is a student in China, Tianjin

My experience studying abroad

My time studying in South Korea

By Carl Wavamunno

I saw an advertisement about an MBA opportunity in South Korea in *New Vision* which was strange as I had never heard of education opportunities in South Korea.

The advertisement was posted by Concern Foundation.

I immediately contacted the office to prove the authenticity of the advertisement, visited the office and did research over the Internet.

I did research on SolBridge International School of Business and the cost of living in South Korea.

I had to make a proper decision basing on the fact that I had options.

The university representative also informed me of other opportunities at the university.

But, little did I know that I was going to the world's top 5% universities, accredited by Harvard, which to this day I am proud of. The education standards are high, here since they follow the Harvard syllabus; and for one to graduate here, you must have a grade point average of three and above.

The university hosts over 60 international students from France, Germany,



Wavamunno at SolBridge International School of Business in South Korea

the Netherlands, Ghana, India, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, China, Indonesia, Turkey, Morocco, Brazil, Mexico and many more others. From time to time, while at campus, I meet students from countries I had never known existed. Case in point is Kazakhstan.

The university has benefited programmes such as exchange courses and transfer to accredited

universities in Canada, Poland, France, the UK and the US. I also benefited from on-campus jobs which are relatively competitive to apply for, but the wage is handsome.

In summer of 2016, I got an off campus job with one of the biggest multinational companies in the world and that was with Hyundai. (Minimum wage is usually \$6.30 per hour) excluding overtime which is

\$8 per hour.

A brief insight into the social life, due to the influx of foreigners, Korea is an open culture with lots of social amenities. The night life is vibrant although pricey.

The writer is pursuing Master's in Business Administration student at SolBridge International School of Business

MY RUSSIAN JOURNEY

By Joshua Tumwine

It all began with a memorandum of understanding between Makerere University and Belgorod State Technological University in Russia, which was facilitated by Concern Scholarship Foundation, an education agency housed by Makerere University.

My childhood dream had been to become one of the leading civil engineers in the country. Unfortunately, it was shattered by just missing a few points to qualify for civil engineering at any one of Uganda's public universities.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Instead of civil engineering, Makerere University admitted me for computer engineering.

By the time I was in third year, with just one year to complete, Concern Scholarship Foundation, came with a great offer to start an exchange programme between Makerere University and a Russian university in the areas of civil, mechanical and electrical engineering. When I read about the offer, I was excited and applied to join the exchange programme.

Luckily, I was admitted and started afresh civil engineering through this exchange programme. There are quite a number of us, from Uganda studying in Russia. I am completing my degree this year. I have had such a wonderful experience in Russia. I have also had a chance to study with some of the world's most brilliant minds.

Being trained and instructed by the world's best professors has opened up my mind and made me think big.

Studying and socialising with such a multi-cultural community with students from different parts of the world has imparted a rich and wide experience and way of thinking.

I have also had the opportunity to challenge the way of thinking of different people from all parts of the world and vice versa. Apart from studies, Russia is a beautiful country with four seasons. The Russian winter is extremely cold and the whole place gets covered with snow.

You need to experience it yourself to understand what I am saying. In winter we go ice skating on ice as you may know, Russia is one of the best countries in winter sports. In the summer, we have a lot of fun visiting different cities and sites.

Russia has one of the best underground train systems in the world. It is a nice experience using this fast metro.

THE PEOPLE

Russians are quite nice people unlike how the western media usually portrays them.

They are friendly and I have got a number of Russian friends. Actually a number of my African friends here have married Russians. This shows you that in Russia its such a huge experience not just studies only.

You will get world class training but at the same time enjoy life.

The writer is a student in Russia

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Africans who study abroad have to adjust to the way of life