

2024 Scholar Cohort



Name: Akindele Afolalu

From: Nigeria

Job: University Placement officer and Admission Counsellor at Oxbridge College

I applied to be a Scholar not only for the limitless growth opportunities it offers, but also to carry out practically what I have for a very long time taught my students. That they can chase a dream that seems so far away and out of reach and snatch it, and that all they had to do was start with a desire. I cannot wait to be exposed to an ocean of information and exposure on how to fulfill my assignment as university placement officer and admissions counselor! And there is no better place to take in such knowledge like an ingathering of like-minds and mentors across nations and varieties of multicultural backgrounds.

Within the time frame of my role as the University Placement Officer and Admissions Counselor at Oxbridge Tutorial College, I have doubled as the personal statement expert and I felt most fulfilled recently when I discovered that within this past year I have guided and taught over 250 of my students on how to write a world class personal statements and essays which have automatically put them on the pedestal at elite universities across the globe as students who qualify for numerous internal and external scholarships. Writing about who they are and aim to be has become so easy.



Name: Anika Brennan

From: USA

Job: Assistant Director of Academics, Elimisha Kakuma

Throughout my last 3 years working as a College Counselor and Assistant Director of Academics with Elimisha Kakuma, I have had the joy of working with many incredible students. Every summer I teach introductory writing, where students start their personal statements. This process demands that they reflect on their past experiences and develop dreams and aspirations for the future. My proudest moments are always checking in with students once they have settled in University and listening to how the hopes they laid out in our writing class have taken root.

I applied to be an International ACAC scholar because I love the work that I do and believe in the students I work with. I want to learn from people in this area of work and connect with opportunities to improve, so that I can be the best guidance counselor I can be for my students.



Name: Nassyr Danagul

From: Kazakhstan

Job: Counselor at Astana Bilim-Innovation Lyceum

One of the proudest moments in my career involves offering support as a counselor during challenging times for students. Being able to assist them when they're uncertain about their career path or college choices is deeply rewarding. It's fulfilling to provide guidance and support in any way possible during these pivotal moments in their lives.

I am keen on broadening my expertise in college counseling through enrollment in the International ACAC Scholar program. As a counselor at Astana Biim-Innovation Lyceum for Gifted Girls, I am dedicated to delivering top-tier support to my students. Engaging with seasoned professionals and gaining insights from various perspectives at the conference will allow me to refine my skills in guiding students toward their academic goals. Additionally, I look forward to establishing connections with university representatives and sharing the knowledge gained with the counseling community in Kazakhstan.



Name: David Ndegwa Wachira

From: Kenya

Job: Director of College Admissions, School Teacher and Head of Guidance and Counseling at Starehe Boys Centre

I have come a long way in my teaching and counseling career finally rising through the ranks to become the Director of College Counseling and Admissions. For over twenty years I have interacted very closely with students aspiring to achieve their international dreams after excelling in the high school curriculum. Starehe Boys' Centre is a unique school and a charitable institution offering tuition and boarding care to bright and exceptional students but from severely disadvantaged families.

My pride and greatest joy are those moments when after struggling and working extremely hard taking them through the college application process, I see quite a number sailing through for international scholarships. Knowing their background and miserable beginnings, I feel overwhelmed with untold joy and great fulfillment. My desire is always to see as many as are able to qualify through this rigorous preparation, to get the opportunity to pursue their highest aspirations.

I applied for the International ACAC Scholars' program so that I can bring home all the skills, all the knowledge and sufficient network opportunities with the international professionals so that students and the counselors in my school and Kenya as a country can benefit more than ever before. This is a dream come true now that I have been selected as a scholar and I look forward to setting my foot on the soil of Canada and all the institutions that we shall visit.



Name: Eleanor Dadsi

From: Ghana

Job: College Admissions Counsellor/Administrator at Merton International Primary & High School

I have been serving as a School Administrator for several years and have recently been given the added responsibility as Head of the Guidance Counseling Department. I applied to be a Scholar to allow me to have formal training, to enable me to offer better services to my students and the young people I mentor. I look forward to interacting with professionals from all over the world and benefiting from the wealth of experience that they have to share. I hope the exchanges with seasoned professionals will give me insights into how to utilize the best opportunities for my students and mentees to attend the best-fit colleges and universities.

My work as a school Guidance Counsellor/Administrator has also enabled me to be a pivot in school community service projects and other school events, and my students have made an impact in their communities and have also made service part of their ethos. My focus at the moment is to give my students the best information that will enable them to make the choices in college applications that are the best fit for their career choices. I am proud to say that my students have gone on to become professionals in IT, Law, Medicine, Media, Educators and other professionals etc.



Name: Emmanuel Moses Kemba
From: Uganda
Job: Counselor at Busolwe Students' Centre

I started University admissions counseling in 2016 as a Volunteer at Busolwe Students Centre, and I am the only admissions counselor that the school and the entire region has to date. I volunteered for two years before they started paying me. I joined university admissions counseling following a very low number of students joining higher levels of education from my region. I therefore decided to offer free admissions counseling to the institution to boost the number of students applying for university admissions. And over the past few years I have seen a tremendous change in the number of students applying for university admission and getting admitted in both local and international universities all over the world. I not only help students of my school, but also help all students from my region because I am the only admissions counselor in the whole of my region.

The International ACAC conference brings together thousands of experienced admissions counselors from over the world. I still require a lot of experience to be in a position to better help students from Eastern Uganda to get admission into higher education institutions all over the world and I look at this conference as an opportunity for me to learn from my colleagues from different parts of the world who share the common interest of Admissions Counseling. This scholarship will not only help me as a counselor but it is for the benefit of the entire students of Eastern Uganda and their parents. I could not therefore afford to miss such a golden opportunity!



Name: Joshua Johnson Thomas

From: Malaysia

Job: Head of University Placement at Methodist College Kuala Lumpur

Twelve years ago, I stumbled into the role of a counselor by chance. Having previously worked with students and taking a career break, a friend informed me of an opening in "Student Services" at my current school. Initially tasked with reviewing student files and highlighting achievements for recommendation letters, I found myself in the same office space as my boss during counseling sessions with students. It was during this time that I developed a deep passion for the role. We formed a formidable team that expanded the department's focus from a single country to encompassing applications worldwide. I embarked on a journey of learning from scratch, utilizing resources like Google and insights from various encounters with counselors and university representatives.

Over the years, I've had the privilege of meeting numerous counselors and university representatives, each encounter adding to my knowledge base. International ACAC stands out as a particularly excellent avenue for professional growth and knowledge acquisition, and I look forward to learning as much as I can to continue in this role. Furthermore, I'm excited about showcasing the Malaysian education system and highlighting what Malaysia has to offer in terms of education. My hope is that the insights I share can benefit schools and communities worldwide, ultimately contributing to ensuring students around the globe have access to quality education opportunities.



Name: Kaboyo Julius

From: Rwanda

Job: Dean of Students and Counselor at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village

Having participated in the Indaba Conference organized by HALI Access Network in Zambia in 2023 and hearing the success stories of people who attended the International ACAC conference, I got inspired to apply for the Scholars Program.

One of my proudest moments as a counselor was when I supported students to apply to schools in the US and helped 3 out of 10 to get full-ride scholarships in my first year. Although I was not sure I was doing the right thing, I was happy that my efforts paid off. I read a lot about applications and utilized pieces of advice from seasoned counselors from Bridge2Rwanda and other organizations. I also attended many webinars and information sessions to understand the application process in order to guide my students well. I am still learning a lot about supporting the most vulnerable students from challenging backgrounds because the landscape of college applications is changing all the time, especially for international students.



Name: Kanatbek Cholokov

From: Kyrgyzstan

Job: College Counselor at Bishkek Chyngyz Aitmatov High School & Head of College Counseling Department at Sapat International Educational Institution

Currently, I'm a College Counselor at Chyngyz Aitmatov High School, while also leading as the Head College Counselor for all 18 Sapat schools. I love what I do, especially being part of the pioneering team that introduced college counseling to our schools. I'm proud to have launched the College Prep class for 10th graders, a first-of-its-kind program in our country, aiming to prepare students for higher education. My goal is simple: to guide students towards success and empower them for their future journeys.

I applied to be an International ACAC Scholar because I am deeply committed to advancing my knowledge and skills in the field of international college admissions counseling. The opportunity to engage with experts, learn about best practices, and collaborate with peers from around the world is invaluable to me. I believe that by participating in this program, I can enhance my ability to support students in navigating the complexities of applying to universities abroad, ultimately empowering them to achieve their academic and career aspirations.



Name: Khishigzaya Sanjaa

From: Mongolia

Job: Counselor and English Teacher at Tolit School

Ranked as a National Top Teacher in the "Enrichment Program for National High School English Language Teachers - 2021," organized by EducationUSA Mongolia, I earned the opportunity to provide my students with the High School Outreach Program - 2021 conducted by MASA and EducationUSA Mongolia. This marked the inception of my career as a University Counselor. Over the past three years, my role has been dedicated to guiding students through the college application process and providing insights into academic and career development. I have proactively initiated and coordinated meetings with support organizations, fostering valuable interactions for our students. This hands-on experience has significantly fortified my ability to deliver effective support, further solidifying my commitment to their academic success.

Participating in the International ACAC Conference, Counselor Bus Tour, and Scholar Mentor Program is not just an opportunity to share our experiences but also a chance for me to embrace the ongoing journey of learning and growth. This experience will significantly enhance my ability to guide students effectively. The exposure gained from these programs will allow me to bring back the latest insights, best practices, and valuable resources to our school. This, in turn, will positively impact our students by providing them with a broader perspective on university opportunities, admissions strategies, and career pathways.



Name: Llyn Kudzai Munjoma

From: Zimbabwe

Job: Biology/Agriculture Teacher and Career Counselor at Rydings College

When I heard about the training of the career counselors which was conducted by the EducationUSA and Education Matters for 6 months in my country in 2021-22. I had never heard of such trainings though I knew that the application process to study abroad was quite hectic. I embraced the opportunity, and it was an eye opener for real. I developed a lot of interest in putting what I had acquired into practice. I then guided a student to obtain a full scholarship in Turkey. It motivated me to talk about university applications and linking academic subjects to the world of work. I began to emphasize the aspects of taking both academic work and extra-curricular activities in order for one to be able to meet some universities' selection criteria.

I applied to the Scholar program so that I can improve the support I provide to the students through gaining knowledge from the sessions and contacts I am going to make during networking. Being involved with other counselors from different parts of the world makes a real difference for me. For they will share their experiences which will boost my confidence upon returning to Zimbabwe. I want to learn more and more from the resources ACAC provides. This exposure will equip me with the necessary knowledge and networks as I maybe one of the resource persons our students will draw information from.



Name: Munoh Adeline Ajeck

From: Cameroon

Job: Certified University and Career Counselor at Enko Schools, Bonanjo Campus

Joining Enko as an ESL/FSL teacher was an opportunity for me to experience education in an International milieu. After four months, I was appointed as a University Guidance Counselor, a career I had no experience in. I had to develop good practices within a month because our school needed to be accredited by IB. I wept for days thinking of resigning because I had to defend that Red flag that stood before our accreditation. It was so challenging that I started looking for resources online for help that guided me to develop some best practices.

Through research, I came across InternationalACAC and other organizations. InternationalACAC offered me a Regional Scholarship to South Africa that changed my perspective of counseling. I created lasting networks that helped my students gain admission. Best counseling practices from experts and other counselors improved my counseling practices. I am excited to share some of the best practices that have helped me survive this far in my counseling career. Sharing ideas with counselors working with low-income students and finding them good universities on scholarships, are experiences that I would like to share. I would also like to share my challenges while learning from other counselors



Name: Myagmarsuren Nyamtaivan

From: Mongolia

Job: Counselor and English Teacher at Darkhan Empathy School

After starting my teaching career in 2007, I was chosen as one of the scholars of Fulbright teaching excellence and achievement program in 2022 and spent 6 weeks exploring new teaching methods and sharing my teaching experience at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. I was also named as a National Top Teacher in the "Enrichment Program for National High School English Language Teachers - 2019," organized by EducationUSA Mongolia. As a result of this program, I could create a good connection with them and cooperated with them to provide my students with the High School Outreach Program – 2022 conducted by MASA and EducationUSA Mongolia.

Besides teaching, one of my main roles at school is to guide students through the college application process and provide recommendation letters to academic organizations and provide career development education. I applied to be an International ACAC Scholar because I can gain more knowledge and experience to help my students apply internationally. I hope this program will help me to expand my horizon as a college counselor, since the college counseling profession is a new career in my country and it is not easy to enhance my knowledge and ability to guide my students. The International ACAC conference is the best chance to learn more about counseling.



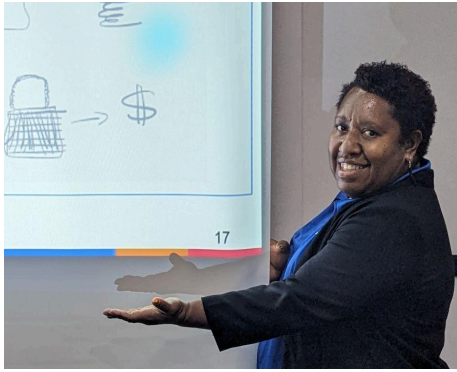
Name: Onoja Sandra Patience

From: Nigeria

Job: College and Career Counsellor at Greensprings School, Lagos, Nigeria

I'm a college and career counselor with a background in customer service, including a stint as Head of Customer Service. My journey into college and career guidance stemmed from my first degree in Counseling Psychology. Backed by a passion to connect with people and offer support, I eagerly searched for opportunities that aligned with my drive and soon enough, one came calling; of course I grabbed it. Service to humanity is at the core of what I do. Each day, I wake up grateful for the opportunity to guide individuals towards fulfilling their college ambitions and career aspirations. It's a simple yet fulfilling role that allows me to blend my love for counseling with practical support for students and professionals alike.

I applied for the IACAC 2024 Scholar program because it's a premier event for counselors, renowned for its prestige and networking opportunities. Being part of such an esteemed organization can elevate my career and open doors to impactful connections. I see it as a chance to grow both professionally and personally, surrounded by like-minded individuals passionate about counseling. By joining this community, I aim to expand my horizons, gain insights, and forge lasting relationships that will propel me forward in my career journey.



Name: Pauline Suvi

From: Papua New Guinea

Job: Science Head of Department, STEM Coordinator & Biology Teacher in Sogeri National School of Excellence, Central Province, Papua New Guinea.

My proudest moment was being part of the team of National School of Excellence teachers in Papua New Guinea that graduated the first STEM curriculum students. 47 of these students were selected to various institutions in the US. I am immensely proud that despite the challenges faced in my country, the students are smart, creative, and innovative.

I want to be like a bridge that can connect and provide a pathway for my country's bright and innovative students, to have opportunities to grow intellectually in a developed country and return home to make a difference. I want to learn how to help my students to be able to dream big and achieve it.



Name: Rita Annan

From: Ghana

Job: English teacher / International College Admission Educator, Aburi Girls' Senior High School

I've held different positions at Aburi Girls' Senior High School (a public boarding school), including teaching English Language and Core Literature and serving as Form Mistress and House Mistress while doubling as an Educator for Foreign Admissions.

I have been making an impact in my students' lives as their university admissions educator. Becoming a member of International ACAC will give me a lot of insight into guiding my students and even going beyond my school community to include other students who need help with their application processes. Being a scholar will give me a lot of opportunities to interact with other counselors and educators across the globe. This would help me share my experiences and also tap into the knowledge-base of other professionals for a more holistic approach to the application process.



Name: Sahara Sheikh

From: Kenya

Job: Program Manager & College Access Counselor at Zawadi Africa Education Fund

I applied to become an International ACAC Scholar because my ultimate goal is to serve as the most effective advocate for my students. Becoming a scholar will provide me with the latest insights and best practices in the field of international student transition to higher education. Networking with diverse professionals, including college admission officers and financial aid experts will allow me to remain well-informed about global trends, ultimately enhancing my ability to offer effective guidance to my students.

One of my most fulfilling experiences occurred when a student of mine, who had spent two years at home after high school (despite scoring an A- in her national exams), finally received acceptance to college on a full scholarship. Enduring the challenges of rural life, including cattle rustling, while her peers moved forward can be incredibly disheartening, but seeing her achievement reminded me of the profound impact access to education and self-belief can have in shaping one's future, regardless of the obstacles one may encounter along the way. This moment for me symbolized the hope and opportunity for others facing similar challenges in our community.



Name: Steve Mauigoa

From: Samoa

Job: Counselor at Church College Pesega High School

This is my fourth year as a counselor since 2019 and I can testify to you that I am really loving this new role of providing services to the students at my school. I have learned to identify students with all kinds of social, academic, and career needs, and was able to provide services that were suitable with their different needs. I was able to guide students with a very low level of confidence to graduate with a successful future to look forward to. Working with these students has allowed me to grow myself and to be mindful of what they can become, if they are guided by a counselor who cares for their future.

I applied to be an International ACAC Scholar because I know it is going to be a wonderful opportunity for me to expand my horizon as a counselor. I have learned from a lot of training done at the local level in our country. However, I believe deep down in my heart that there is more that I need to learn. International ACAC was that opportunity because I can now learn not only at a different level, but from an international pool of more experienced professionals.



Name: Toulack Kingsley

From: Cameroon

Job: Counselor/Science Teacher at Government Bilingual High School Nkol Eton Yaounde

I have served as a science teacher for over ten years, inspiring students to excel in science and fostering genuine love for my subject while going the extra mile to ensure holistic development and success of learners. In my six years as a counselor, I have brought uncountable opportunities to students for scholarships and personal development and mentored over 200 students with 20 students securing fully funded scholarships under the World Bank, Ashinaga, and Mastercard foundations programs etc. I have also contributed to increasing access to international education in my school from less than 5% to over 20%.

Though with quite some outstanding achievements, I am pretty new in the field of counseling, and like Albert Einstein, I am looking for those giants on whose shoulders I can stand to see far. I also look forward to sharing the challenges faced by students and counselors from my country in accessing international education so that we could together find sustainable solutions to these problems as education cannot wait and no child should be left behind.



Name: Zhannura Saidmuratova

From: Kazakhstan

Job: School Career and College Counsellor at Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Chemistry & Biology, Almaty

As a school career and college counselor, I've supported students in exploring research and project work, enriching their academic portfolios. My work has helped strengthen student applications for leading global universities. Through these efforts, I've contributed to enhancing the school's academic environment and aided students in competing on an international level, increasing their chances for admission to prestigious educational institutions worldwide.

I also have experience working for the Intellectual Schools for Gifted Children (Nazarbayev Intellectual School – NIS), a unique state project which awards educational grants to students chosen from a large pool of highly competitive students and is aimed at training future leaders who are already contributing to the development of Kazakhstan. This project gives equal opportunities to ordinary children, both from cities and rural areas, to receive an international education and enter leading universities in the USA, Canada, Europe and Asia, with a program equivalent to A-level.

Being a counselor in a large school and guiding talented students towards their dreams can feel daunting without much experience. Connecting with counselors worldwide would be incredibly impactful. I'm really excited to absorb everything International ACAC provides so I can continue learning and improving.