



INTERNATIONAL ACAC SCHOLAR PROGRAM

2025 SCHOLAR BIOS

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NAME: Ginnie Hughes
FROM: Panamá
JOB: College Counsellor at Centro ¡Superate!
Fundacion Provivienda



I currently serve as the Deputy Director of the ¡Supérate! Center at Fundación Provivienda in Panama, a role that I have held since January 2019. In this position, I am responsible for coordinating the academic area of the program, focusing on student-centered objectives. My work involves reviewing the academic load against the curriculum and organizing strategies to enhance student performance and potential. I diligently monitor students' academic behavior, implements measures to prevent drop-out rates, and provides career counseling for graduating students. Additionally, I teach values to 12th graders and oversees the Values Department, ensuring a comprehensive educational experience for all participants.

Prior to this I was a preschool psychologist from February 2016 to December 2018 at a kindergarten in Panama, where I observed classrooms to identify any difficulties among children. Working closely with teachers by suggesting strategies to improve their teaching practices and provided follow-up observations for students with special needs. My collaborative approach included bringing together specialists who addressed identified cases, fostering teamwork to benefit students in the classroom. Furthermore, I engaged with parents, offering insights and alternatives to support their children's development, thereby ensuring that each child received tailored guidance and intervention.

My passion is to teach, leave a mark and as our slogan says: "change lives through education."

NAME: Janice M. Gemao
FROM: Manila, Philippines
JOB: Senior High School Guidance Counselor at Saint Pedro Poveda College



I started my career as a college counselor and middle school counselor, and I am now a senior high school counselor, currently in my 12th year in the profession. Recognizing my limited knowledge of college admissions, I took the initiative to attend workshops and conferences to deepen my understanding of the applica-

tion process. This effort not only enhanced my expertise but also expanded my network, allowing me to connect with school representatives internationally.

I applied for this scholarship to deepen my knowledge of admission counseling and better support our students in the international application process, particularly as many aspire to study in the U.S. for the opportunities it offers. I also want to stay updated on current college trends and expand my professional network to enhance the guidance I provide.

Being part of an international organization enables me to stay connected with experts in the field and remain up to date on the latest developments in college admissions. This scholarship presents a valuable opportunity to grow professionally, and I am confident that the experience will have a significant impact on my work in assisting students with their applications abroad.

NAME: Julius Kaboyo
FROM: Rwanda
JOB: Dean of Student (Counsellor) at The Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village



I served as a teacher, Head of Language Department and Deputy Academic Director prior to serving as the Senior College Counselor and Dean of Students at Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda. Since joining this role, I have successfully organized education and career fairs, facilitated mentorship programs, and established partnerships with universities in different parts of the world. Additionally, I have completed various professional development courses in college counseling including the CAP course by Times Higher Education, Embark Course by IC3 Institute, and I am a 2023-2024 Times Higher Education Accredited Counselor. I also volunteer on the HALI Access Network Membership Committee and have initiated a consortium composed of high schools and universities in Rwanda aiming at strengthening career offices and services offered to students.

I am confident the conference will equip me with the skills necessary to adjust my curriculum to reflect these realities, learn first hand from universities how admissions processes are changing and the kind of students they are looking for. This knowledge will allow me to prepare my students better for not only university applications but also to equip them with skills that will enable them to thrive.

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NAME: Keyla Cavalcante Carvalho
FROM: Brazil
JOB: Fundação Estudar



Before my current role overseeing the Prep Program at Fundação Estudar, I was a student a decade ago in the very same program, navigating the challenges of applying to U.S. universities as a low-income, first-generation student. Now, as an Advisor, I support students through every step of their college applications, from

essay writing to financial aid guidance. Over the past year, I have worked closely with dozens of students, many of whom initially doubted their chances but ultimately secured admission and scholarships to top schools. Beyond individual advising, I have developed resources such as scholarship tracking tools, detailed application guides, and peer tutoring initiatives to help students maximize their opportunities and growth. Seeing students grow in confidence and achieve what once felt impossible has been the most rewarding part of my work.

I applied to be an International ACAC Scholar because I am eager to expand my knowledge and bring back insights that will help me better serve my students. While I have gained experience through my own application process and my work at Fundação Estudar, I know there is always more to learn — especially from professionals around the world who have been in this field for years. Engaging with a global network of counselors will allow me to ensure that students from underrepresented backgrounds continue to have access to life-changing opportunities.

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: Madi Izmailov
FROM: Semey, Kazakhstan
JOB: School Counsellor at Nazarbayev Intellectual School of Physics and Mathematics in Semey



I started my teaching career in 2014. I taught English and held different administrative positions and now I am in my 5th year as a school counselor. Being the sole school counselor at my school, I support 797 students from grades 7 to 12, including 119 final-year students. My journey into counseling began with a deep passion for helping students find the right educational paths, even in an environment where resources for guidance are limited. Through my guidance, students have successfully applied to universities worldwide, gaining scholarships and financial aid. Beyond counseling, I actively engage in professional development, participating in international programs to bring back valuable insights to my students and fellow educators. My dedication to my work stems from a belief that access to the right information and mentorship can transform lives.

I applied to be an IACAC Scholar because I see this as an invaluable opportunity to expand my knowledge, build a network with experienced professionals, and bring back best practices to my students. As the only counselor at my school, I often face challenges alone, but through this program, I hope to gain mentorship, new strategies, and resources to better support my students. The chance to engage with global experts will help me refine my skills and create even greater opportunities for students in Kazakhstan.

I am excited to share my experiences as a counselor working in an underrepresented region, highlighting the challenges and opportunities students in Kazakhstan face when applying to international universities.

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NAME: Sahara A. Sheikh
FROM: Nairobi, Kenya
JOB: Program Manager & College Access Counselor, Zawadi Africa Education Fund



One of the most meaningful moments in my counseling journey was helping a student who had stayed home for two years after high school, despite earning an A - in her national exams. Life in a rural community, marked by challenges such as cattle rustling, had left her with limited options. Supporting her through the application process and

eventually seeing her receive a full scholarship - including airfare, visa, and an unexpected Business Class upgrade on her first flight - was a powerful reminder of what belief and opportunity can achieve.

As a college access counselor at Zawadi Africa, I work with bright young women from underserved communities, helping them navigate the complexities of international higher education. I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program because I want to sharpen my knowledge and become a stronger advocate for my students. Connecting with experienced mentors, learning about best practices, and staying informed on global trends will help me guide my students more effectively and ensure they are not only seen but fully supported in achieving their dreams.

NAME: Yara Abdeen
FROM: Jerusalem, Palestine
JOB: Deputy Manager & Program Officer, Horizons Academy



My journey began when I earned a full scholarship to Brigham Young University - an experience that shaped my passion for education and student empowerment. At Horizons Academy, I've helped scale our program from serving 22 students to over 500 across Palestine, securing more than \$16 million in scholarships for under-

represented youth. Beyond numbers, I'm most proud of building pathways for students in conflict - affected regions to access world - class education.

I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program to deepen my understanding of holistic admissions, financial aid systems, and global best practices. With the field constantly evolving, staying informed is critical. I want to bring back actionable knowledge to our team of counselors and the broader community. This program will not only strengthen my work but allow

me to amplify its impact through training workshops and strategic improvements at Horizons Academy - so that more young Palestinians can dare to dream and achieve.

NAME: Vivian Deus
FROM: Tanzania
JOB: Senior Manager, Special Programs, The School of St Jude



At The School of St Jude, I lead programs that develop students' leadership, employability, and academic skills while nurturing a strong alumni network. Every day, I mentor young people and collaborate with public and private partners to increase access to higher education for our students - especially those from underserved communities.

My work is rooted in the belief that education is the most powerful tool to transform lives. I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program to learn from a global network of professionals who share this vision. I'm eager to gain insights that will refine my approach, strengthen our alumni initiatives, and help create resilient education ecosystems - not just for St Jude's, but for Tanzania and Africa at large.

NAME: Rita Annan
FROM: Aburi, Ghana
JOB: Academic Counselor & English Teacher, Aburi Girls' Senior High School



I began my teaching career in a rural village in Ghana and have since grown into multiple leadership roles at Aburi Girls' Senior High School, where I teach English and guide students through the international college admissions process. My passion lies in helping young people recognize their potential and prepare for

the world beyond our classrooms. Over the years, I've facilitated workshops, inter - school competitions, and collaborations with foreign institutions to expand opportunities for my students.

I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program to enhance my ability to support students both within and beyond my school. I want to connect with professionals from around the world, exchange ideas, and bring back innovative strategies to further improve the guidance we offer. For me, this opportunity is about growing as an educator and multiplying that growth within the students and educators I work with in Ghana.

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NAME: Nur Asiah binti Mohd Ramli
FROM: Malaysia
JOB: University Relations Assistant Manager, Kolej Yayasan UEM



After eight years in HR, I transitioned into university counseling, and for over a decade now, I've had the privilege of guiding students through their university application journeys, especially to the UK and US. One of the most rewarding parts of my job is seeing our students celebrated during Awards Day, with their university placements displayed proudly - a culmination of years of effort and partnership.

I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program because I believe in lifelong learning. I want to learn from global experts, exchange best practices, and return with insights that will directly benefit my students. I also look forward to contributing my own experiences to the broader international counseling community and working together to improve access to education for all.

NAME: Moh Suhaili
FROM: Indonesia
JOB: Manager of Study Abroad Enrollment & International Relations, Thursina IIBS



When I moved from teaching to managing our study abroad program, I set a goal: increase the number of students studying overseas by 30%. Today, we've surpassed that, with 124 alumni enrolled in universities across the globe and a robust curriculum supporting over 200 active students. I've organized international language camps and built institutional partnerships - from Flinders University in Australia to Islamic University of Madinah - so our students are globally prepared.

I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program because I see it as an opportunity to learn, grow, and give back. I want to bring global insights to support Indonesia's national vision of sending more students abroad by 2045. As our country aspires to strengthen its global presence, I believe educators and counselors like me must be equipped to guide the next generation effectively - and this program is a vital part of that journey.

NAME: Marium Sherzaman
FROM: Karachi, Pakistan
JOB: Career Counsellor, Beaconhouse College Program – PECHS Campus



In just three years as a counselor, I've helped our campus break an 11 - year record for international placements and won the Star Career Advisor Award for achieving the highest number of scholarships per student. My students are now studying across 10+ regions, and knowing I've played a role in opening those doors is what keeps me going.

I applied to the International ACAC Scholars Program because I believe Pakistan's high school counseling system is still evolving, and I want to be part of that progress. Much of my growth has come from self - learning and experimentation. This opportunity offers structured mentorship, access to best practices, and a global community of peers - all of which will help me grow, refine my strategies, and ultimately, better serve my students and the broader education landscape in my country.

NAME: Genevieve Pool
FROM: Burundi
JOB: Pathways and Partnerships Manager at Kigutu International Academy (KIA)



Genevieve is the Pathways and Partnerships Manager at Kigutu International Academy (KIA), a pioneering international school in Burundi and a program of Village Health Works (VHW), an NGO providing healthcare, education, and community services to underserved populations. Founded in 2019, KIA is the only private international school in Burundi with need-blind admissions and full financial aid, offering a transformative education to bright, ambitious students from low-income backgrounds. Genevieve joined KIA in its second year, teaching a variety of courses and helping to lay the groundwork for the school's development. Over the past three years, she has developed the school's college pathways initiative, working to overcome challenges of resources and access.

With a background in education and college access, including a fellowship in Rwanda and experience at a nonprofit in New York, Genevieve has supported KIA's mission of cultivating ethical leaders and critical thinkers. She has guided students to universities in

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Africa and the U.S., often with full financial aid. In her current role, she oversees college preparation, builds partnerships with universities and funders, and works to expand opportunities for KIA's students, who are driven to learn and contribute to Burundi's future. Through her work, Genevieve strives to empower students to access world-class education and bring their skills back to their communities, aligning with KIA and VHW's shared vision of creating lasting change.

NAME: Janice Jemmott
FROM: Barbados
JOB: Guidance Counsellor at Queen's College



I have had the opportunity to work with students and parents as they navigate their academic terrain. At Queen's College we have developed programmes to help students who are struggling academically and put them on the path to realizing their success both academically and personally. Student mental health is vital to their overall success. My role is to provide them with the knowledge, understanding, and skills to manage the stressors that sometimes come with school and life in general. This is achieved through our Health and Family Life class interactions, personal and group counselling, providing access to the relevant support personnel, and conducting parent conferences in support of my student population. During the course of my career, I have supported my students in their pursuit of higher education. Students have applied and been accepted into universities in Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, the USA, and the Caribbean.

Other major career highlights include teaching in the certificate course in Guidance and Counselling for several years with the University of the West Indies Open Campus, as well as training frontline workers – nurses and regiment personnel – in basic counselling skills.