

2019 International ACAC Scholars



Titilola Adeeko is a secondary school counselor at Zamani College in Kaduna, in northern Nigeria. She is a recipient of the 2013 Yale Educator of the Year Award and participated in the Yale Young African Scholars Conference held in Ghana in 2017. Titilola's passion for her job is fueled by a quest for qualitative word class education that will provide the transformation of mindsets and produce passionate and selfless leaders who will make a positive difference in Nigeria.

In her nomination, Folashade Adebayo, Education Advising Supervisor at EducationUSA Abuja, wrote, "Zamani College is the leading sending school in Northern Nigeria to schools overseas. However, due to distance and limited travel opportunities, we rarely have those opportunities to visit Kaduna as much as we will like. [Titilola] is very active, and this exposure will be a ripple factor that will positively affect others schools in the region. She will organize train-the-trainer program around Northern Nigeria. She has the capacity of exposing other counselors to the several opportunities available in the United States and beyond after this training opportunity." Titilola is a member of the Counsellors Association of Nigeria, and in her spare time, she loves gardening and listening to music.



Nominator Gregory Manne, Admissions Officer and Special Assistant to the Vice Provost at Dartmouth College, has first-hand familiarity of **Anelisa Macedo's** impact. He wrote, "Anelisa mentored two students who are currently King Scholars at Dartmouth in the ISMART program. The King Scholarship is an incredible award that Dartmouth offers to 6 full-need international students from developing countries each year. This past August, I conducted a case study workshop with ISMART kids and their ability blew me away."

Working in education for 30 years as an independent tutor, counselor and advisor, Anelisa began her career as an ESL teacher in São Paulo, Brazil. She noticed that pupils who were motivated to develop themselves in another language were inspired by connections; they were interested in learning English because communication was a tool that connected them to their goals.

Over the years, under her counseling, 48 low-income students have been accepted and received full scholarships to attend summer programs at Yale, Harvard, University of Chicago, Stanford and Notre Dame, among others. Seven of those students received admission and enrolled in "Ivy Plus" schools as undergraduates. Their personal accounts have had a ripple effect on others, leading to an increase of applicants every year. Looking for ways to highlight each student's unique path, Anelisa helps them use English to tell their stories of autonomy, motivation, commitment and persistence.

Asked to consult with schools, colleges and other organizations, Anelisa is part of a team who have developed Craft Project, a start-up that allows students to investigate careers before they choose their majors.



A 2014 recipient of the Endeavour Executive Fellowship for ESL professionals from the Australian Government, **Baman Kumar Ghimire** has been an English teacher, Coordinator for International Collaboration and Guidance Counselor at Motherland Secondary School, Nepal, for over a decade. Motherland Secondary School was awarded with the International School Award (2015-2018) by the British Council, has partnered with GEIST International Foundation for international collaboration, and has been repeatedly recognized by the Government of Nepal as one of the best schools in the country. Serving about 2500 students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, the school is committed to empower learners in global citizenship.

A Department of State International Volunteer Leadership (IVLP) award in 2017 allowed him to closely observe American university classes and thus prepare his students for global competition, especially through their engagement in Open Online Courses. His students have graduated from universities in the United States, UK, Australia, New Zealand and India. He works closely with EducationUSA/USEF-Nepal and travels to schools across the country advocating why and how the students can best prepare for and excel in studies abroad.

Selena Malla, EducationUSA Adviser at the United States Educational Foundation in Nepal (USEF-Nepal), called Baman “a powerhouse of energy and dynamism.” Based in Pokhara, Baman plays a powerful role in motivating his students despite accessibility obstacles, which Selena noted in her nomination: “to take standardized tests such as the TOEFL or SAT/ACT, students must take a seven hour bus journey to Kathmandu through winding roads or travel by domestic flight which can be costly. Baman serves as strong motivation not only to his own students at Motherland Secondary School, but also to students in his community, encouraging students to think out of the box and go for opportunities despite their limited resources.”



Since 2015, **Daniyar Izmailov** has been working as a physics teacher and a college counsellor at Nurorda High School, which is a part of the Bilim Innovation school network in Kazakhstan. The schools in this network have experienced ample success nationally and internationally in science Olympiads; the network's students have earned over 20,000 medals in these competitions. Despite the fact that the curriculum is national, about 50% of students have been accepted to top foreign universities such as Boston University, Hong Kong universities and King's College London. Daniyar explains, "We are pioneers in college counselling in Kazakhstan and in a very short time we have widened the mindset of students to opportunities to study abroad and to get full financial support and scholarships." In addition to counseling students, Daniyar leads and supports the college counsellors of each of the 37 Bilim Innovation schools. He has overseen transforming the school transcripts to match international standards and offering SAT and IELTS courses with the assistance of EducationUSA.

EducationUSA Adviser Raushan Uzakova at American Councils for International Education in Kazakhstan notes that in addition to the work he has done for his students and fellow Bilim school counselors, Daniyar's attendance at the International ACAC conference will be helpful to increase university visits to Kazakhstan: "Being a graduate of one of the BILIM schools, he knows the history and the structure of the school and the consortium well. He can be a great source of information for many U.S. universities which are interested in recruiting high performing students from Kazakhstan. One of the goals of Daniyar is to raise recognition of his school and all the BILIM schools. International ACAC is the best place for him to meet with the representatives, share his best practices, and learn from colleagues."



Ikbala Catic has been an employee of Prva bosnjacka gimnazija (First Bosniak High School) in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2006. The school was founded in 1995 and became a registered Cambridge International Centre in 2005, offering Cambridge IGCSE and AS/A Level programmes, in addition to national curriculum.

Ikbala has taught English Language, Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language and AS/A Level English Language. In 2016, she was promoted to the position of Cambridge International School coordinator and exams officer. Considering that a position of college counselor is uncommon (almost non-existent) in the local education system, the position of the school coordinator implies the responsibilities of a college counselor. Ever since she was introduced to the counseling part of the job, Ikbala has been excited and eager to learn more in order to provide the best possible guidance for her students.

Ikbala's nominator knows personally how the International ACAC Scholar Program can benefit someone in this situation since she herself is a Scholar alumna. Bela Gligorova, Director of Guidance and Counseling at Nova International Schools in Macedonia, wrote of Ikbala, "In our conversations, it soon became apparent that she is truly committed to the school's community, and while scrambling for resources, is hoping to learn and create a sustainable counseling and advising program. In Sarajevo, resources are shared, so my sense is that she would be the key person for her city and not just her school."



Originally qualified as teacher of History

and English in 1997, **Olivia O'Connor** came to Guidance and Counselling with experience in post graduate studies in Applied Theology and Community Development. This inspired her approach to education, striving towards the ideal that we can achieve more collectively than we could ever individually.

She has worked in the voluntary secondary school sector throughout her career, and over the

last 13 years in St. Joseph's Secondary School in Tulla, Co. Clare, on the west coast of Ireland. With increasing numbers, the school has expanded the guidance service considerably with particular emphasis in recent years on expanding pathways, both in the secondary education programmes, and further options after secondary school. Nationally, however, there is significant competition for college places and with the impact of Brexit looming, the school has to expand opportunities for its students internationally. Olivia is the Chairperson of the local branch of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors in Clare, which provides its members with opportunities for best practice sharing and continuous professional development.

Olivia was nominated by a former St. Joseph's student who is now at UWC Changshu, and who wrote of her, "Olivia has, quite simply, been one of the central pillars of an entire community. In an underfunded school from a low-income area in the west of Ireland, Olivia serves many roles for nearly 600 students - she is the sole university counselor and grief/emotional counselor; as well as this, she teaches English, History, and Social, Personal & Health Education. I am nominating Olivia because, at every moment where I have suffered from stress, her door has been open. Whenever I had a question about my future, her door has been open, despite the hundreds of students she has to take care of. And every time I walked out that door, I did so with confidence."



Oyunchimeg Ayurzana is an English teacher and the Head

of

the Languages Department at Mongol Aspiration International Laboratory School (MAILS), which is one of three pilot Cambridge schools in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Besides the national curriculum, her school offers Cambridge International programmes that increase opportunities for students to study abroad. As counselling is quite a new experience for Mongolian schools outside of the few private schools, state schools lack experienced and knowledgeable counselors. Her nominator, Gantamur Bat-Erdene, Advisor at Mongolia's Educational Advising Resource Center (EARC), explained that after having "only Google for help" in the beginning, Oyunchimeg took it on herself to seek out resources such as the EARC. Gantamur remarks that "She has since become a highly effective counselor at her school...She is helping her students achieve their goals. In the last three years alone, fifteen students from Mongol Aspiration have gone on to study at universities in Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Hungary, Russia, South Korea, and the United States."

Volunteering her time, Oyunchimeg helps students and their parents to develop a study plan depending on their specific needs and skills as early as possible. She cares to improve the students' abilities to make good decisions for a future profession, when and where to sit for necessary exams, what documents are required, how to write personal essays, and how to complete the university application process. In addition to her constant counselling for all students at MAILS, she gives special support to the 36 students in her homeroom class, a majority of whom were accepted by well-known universities around the world.



Tenzin Wosel is a Guidance Counselor at one of the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) schools in India, a non-profit school network with multiple locations in India and affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). She is a Tibetan refugee born and brought up in India who got the opportunity to study under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In fact, she studied at another TCV campus – that which is located in Ladakh, J&K, India (she now works at TCV Gopalpur in Himachal Pradesh, Dharamasala).

She studied psychology at Delhi University, later pursuing graduate work in counseling Psychology. After completing her studies, she returned to her own community and has been working in TCV Schools since. She has served as a counselor for 15 years now, guiding students with emotional support, career counseling, and university applications.

Many of her students are orphans or are far from their parents in China, and thus rely on scholarships, often receiving aid specific to Tibetan students. Several – like her two nominators – have continued their secondary school education at United World Colleges (UWCs). In fact, one of her nominators remarked that one of the TCV schools where Tenzin has worked “has produced more than 50% of Tibetan UWC students from India.” After their time at UWCs, her students have gone on to Duke University, University of Rochester, Earlham University, and University of Oklahoma, to name a few. Tenzin helps students by giving information about scholarships and the application process, and most importantly by preparing them for interviews. She is determined to continue to motivate students in the future to help more Tibetan students gain the confidence to dream.