



ASHINAGA

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**Ashinaga
Africa
Initiative**

2021 Annual Report

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Message from Our Founder



This is the first time I have experienced such a long pandemic in almost 87 years of my life. Living under Covid-19 restrictions has been suffocating and isolating. I am certain many of our supporters have also been struggling due to this situation, for which I am deeply sorry. I hope everything in your life returns to normal soon.

When we conducted a survey this autumn among 4,000 guardians of our orphaned scholars in Japan, we realized that 1 in 4 did not have any income in September. Since the situation had become this severe in a high-income country like Japan, I grew concerned that the impact on Ashinaga Africa Initiative (AAI) Scholars has been even more detrimental.

And in fact, some AAI Scholars have been unable to enter their country of study and are forced to attend classes online. Because of the time difference and their living situation back home, they cannot focus on studying, and suffer both mentally and physically. However, I believe that persevering and diligently continuing their studies ultimately will become a source of strength that will unlock their futures. Many Scholars are already proactively participating in internships or international events online, changing this experience into an example of how to survive the “New Normal.”

Moreover, thanks to the development of information technology, Ashinaga has been able to collaborate with local partners online, receiving support for our recruitment process. We have also undertaken extra efforts to support the Scholars with setting up their internet connections, online learning, and maintaining general well-being through frequent staff check-ins.

Among our current AAI Graduates are those who have started projects to solve problems in their local communities back home, those who have found employment in companies bridging Japan, or the country of study, and the African continent, and many others, gradually giving shape to AAI’s mission of “cultivating leaders who will contribute to sub-Saharan Africa.”

This year I am hoping to continue spreading the *Kokorozashi* (mission) of the Ashinaga Movement throughout the world. Thank you for all your help and I kindly request your continued support and cooperation.

玉井 義信

Yoshiomi Tamai

President and Founder of Ashinaga



Our Mission

Ashinaga provides education and support worldwide to students who have lost either one or both parents. This empowers them to overcome challenges and advance their education, develop leadership skills, and become agents of social change.



Our Vision

We believe in the eradication of poverty through equitable education and professional training for all young people who have lost their parents.



Our Ethos

A warm heart, an open mind, a proactive attitude, and an international outlook.

About Ashinaga

Ashinaga is a Japanese foundation providing financial support and emotional care worldwide to young people who have lost one or both parents. The movement originates back to 1963 when founder Yoshiomi Tamai lost his mother due to a traffic accident. A few years later he started the Association for Traffic Accident Orphans, which through public advocacy, street fundraising, and summer camps provided support to students who had lost their parents in traffic accidents. Gradually, the organization extended its support to Scholars bereaved by causes such as illness, natural disaster or suicide, and started the Ashinaga-san scholarship system, based on anonymous donations. 1993 marked the start of the Ashinaga Foundation.

After the Great Hanshin Earthquake struck in 1995, leaving hundreds of children without parents, Ashinaga, aided by donations from all over the world, constructed Rainbow House (Hyogo Prefecture, Kobe), the first emotional care facility in Japan created to help heal the emotional trauma of bereaved children. The organization also opened its first residential facility, Kokoro-juku, with the aim of allowing underprivileged Scholars to study in metropolitan areas. Around the same time, honoring the spirit of paying it forward, Ashinaga began supporting orphaned students from other countries, and in 2001 established its first overseas office and emotional care facility in Uganda. In 2006, the organization started supporting orphaned students from Uganda, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Haiti, enabling them to study at universities in Japan. During this period Ashinaga also expanded opportunities for its Japanese students, offering study-abroad programs in many countries. 2014 marked the start of the Ashinaga Africa Initiative (AAI), a leadership program aiming to cultivate the next generation of leaders who will contribute to the development of sub-Saharan Africa. In the following years the organization opened overseas offices in Senegal, the USA, the UK, France, and Brazil to support the journey of AAI Scholars. Over the past 55 years, Ashinaga has raised more than \$1 billion (USD) to enable over 110,000 orphaned students around the world to access higher education.

Ashinaga Africa Initiative

Ashinaga Africa Initiative (AAI) is an international academic leadership program launched in 2014 to cultivate sub-Saharan Africa's next generation of leaders. It aims to contribute to the region's expanding role in global development through increasing access to international higher education.

AAI Scholars, who have lost one or both parents, are committed to returning to sub-Saharan Africa post-graduation to initiate change, innovation, and development. Ashinaga provides the Scholars with financial support for international undergraduate degrees along with a holistic leadership program to develop them into compassionate young change-makers. Every year one promising Scholar is accepted from each country in sub-Saharan Africa. We currently support scholars from 46 out of the 49 sub-Saharan African countries, studying at top universities across the world.

We contribute to the following SDGs:



After passing the competitive selection process—acceptance rate is on average 4%—AAI Candidates begin their preparatory year.



It starts with a six-month Study Camp in either Uganda or Senegal, where they undertake intensive academic and leadership development courses. After a short break, Candidates join a two-month Preparation Camp to get ready for life in a different environment.



Once they enroll into their university, they embark on their journey as AAI Scholars, developing their professional, academic, and personal leadership skills with the support of Ashinaga's staff and a global network.



During their undergraduate studies, Scholars conduct research and put together proposals to tackle a social issue in their local communities.



They also develop their professional skills by completing at least one internship on the African continent.



After earning their degrees, AAI Graduates can gain work experience in their country of study or pursue a post-graduate degree before going back to sub-Saharan Africa, which is a core requirement of the AAI. AAI Graduates are young leaders who will return to the African continent and use their skill set to identify existing issues, develop concrete solutions, and positively impact their communities.

2021 Highlights

Ashinaga Foundation

Ashinaga Foundation conducted its first street fundraising in Japan since the pandemic began, which took place simultaneously in 12 cities across the country.

Ashinaga currently supports almost

10,000

(9,830) students around the world,
recording an all-time high.

94%

of scholars passed their academic year and
57% achieved a distinction in their grades

African Offices

Most programming this year had to be delivered

[Remotely]

due to the pandemic. Despite the challenges this posed, AAI Candidates' determination saw them perform very well academically, with some scoring as high as 1400 on the SATs and 8.5 on IELTSs, and securing acceptances at world-leading universities, including University of Warwick, ENS Paris-Saclay.

Over the next ten years we aspire to support

1,000 AAI
Scholars

who will go on to become the next
generation of compassionate young leaders.

Ashinaga Africa Initiative (AAI)

The AAI currently supports Scholars

145
FROM
46
COUNTRIES

and has recruited from 47 countries
in sub-Saharan Africa

AAI Graduates are working in Africa in diverse roles, including engineers, university lecturers, and policy advisors. Other Graduates are gaining experience in their country of study before returning to the continent, including by working in biomedical labs, banks, and private companies.

AAI Scholars are excelling academically in some of the best universities in the world while also developing their leadership skills and contributing to the African continent by establishing foundations, social enterprises, and volunteer organizations.

We have improved our policies to promote applications from women and under-represented groups and strengthened our career development support.

Scholar & Graduate Achievement



AAI Scholar

Imaculada

Imaculada is an AAI Scholar from Angola. She is studying Business Administration at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo in Brazil. In 2021 she completed her undergraduate research, which was subsequently approved for publication in an academic journal under the title of “Entrepreneurial Traits in New Students of Business Administration.” Imaculada also submitted her undergraduate thesis on the comparative study of internship processes in Brazilian and Angolan companies. It was challenging to conduct the research online, due to limited internet access among Angolan students, but she was able to finish the thesis and received a considerable number of responses from the students.

Since May 2021, she has been working as a Human Resources intern in a multinational company that operates in the field of technology. Recently she received the wonderful news that she will be promoted to Junior HR Analyst.

Earlier last year, Imaculada undertook her Ashinaga internship remotely with Fundação Atena for Girls and Women in Guinea-Bissau. She looks back upon it as a unique experience, and her link with the organization has continued, as today she is also an official ambassador of the organization. Imaculada recalls, “2021 was an atypical year, a year of challenges, a year of resilience, and in the end a year of revival, which even despite the great losses we faced this year, I can still pause and be thankful for it all.”



AAI Graduate

Lerato

Lerato is a member of AAI’s first graduating classes working in Africa. From 2016 to 2020, she studied in the USA at Mount Holyoke College, where she majored in Political Science, Entrepreneurship, Organizations, and Society.

Lerato is now working as an Entrepreneurship Specialist at Anheuser - Busch InBev in South Africa, where she runs developmental training programs for taverns and retailers. As an entrepreneurial specialist, she also leads

partnerships, communications, and projects for the team. She believes strongly that her journey prepared her to embrace leadership in her current role by helping her to understand the needs of the entrepreneurs she works with. Lerato is passionate about entrepreneurship and its role in driving development. She hopes to use her skills and experiences to empower women in South Africa through entrepreneurship training and opportunities.

This year, the AAI Recruitment team has adapted and improved on the lessons learned from the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the ongoing challenges, we finished the entirely remote 2021 recruitment process with the selection of 45 students from 39 countries.

Looking towards 2022, we have innovated our recruitment strategies and policies for a more effective and inclusive approach. To synchronize with the Lusophone program, applications opened for the first time simultaneously across all three main language groups on August 2, 2021. Across 12 Anglophone and Francophone countries, AAI has partnered with individuals and organizations working with similar demographics to support promotional activities on the ground. Moreover, gender- and other minority-inclusive policies have been introduced from promotion to the point of selection. With a more detailed application that asks gender-sensitive questions the recruitment team is collecting data on barriers to girls' education and have adapted our assessment system in light of this.

A final exciting update is that AAI is now recruiting from all 49 sub-Saharan African countries, with applications open to Equatorial Guinea for the first time. As it is a Hispanophone country, this poses a unique challenge for all involved, and Equatoguinean students would be eligible to study in either English or French. The AAI Recruitment Team looks forward to receiving its first applications and students from this nation.

Recruitment

2,348
applications

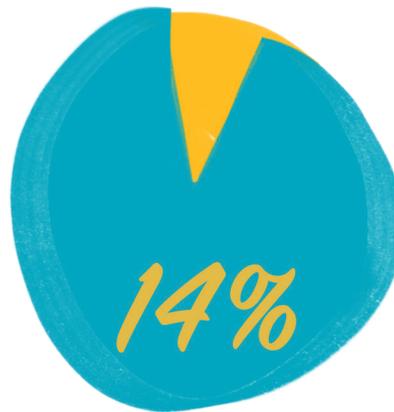
Applications
open to



for the
first time



45 students
selected
from



of selected
applicants lost
both parents

39
countries



53%

of selected
applicants are
first generation
university students

Preparation and Study Camp

Uganda

Preparation Camp: 9 students
Study Camp: 15 students
Total of 14 countries
1 leadership project
2 volunteering placements
IELTS baseline average score 4.5/9
IELTS endline average score 6/9

Over the last year, the format of the Preparation Year has been adapted to ensure the health and safety of Scholars, interns, and staff members. At the beginning of 2021 AAI welcomed nine students to the Preparation Camp who were aiming to complete their practical and administrative preparation before their departure to France and Japan. Soon after, 15 students joined along with 10 interns for a six-

month Study Camp. They followed an intensive curriculum including academic and language classes, volunteering, and educational outings in addition to pursuing other professional and personal development. Thanks to their International English Language Testing System (IELTS) preparation, the students all reached the level required for their university applications, improving from an average of 4.5 to 6 out of 9 in only three months. The students applying to French universities also all successfully passed their Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DALF) exam. AAI staff was particularly proud to see students run an awareness campaign around mental health for Senegalese youth as part of their community project. The result was the creation of several products, including a website to host their podcast, articles, and videos, and a flyer that was handed out to a high school of the Dakar region.

Senegal

Preparation Camp (remote)
18 students from 18 countries

In addition to increasing AAI Candidates' academic level, the camp also prepares them to integrate well into their new communities. Travel bans and the ongoing pandemic meant they could not physically come to Uganda and we had to provide additional resources to guarantee we could still meet our objectives.

Many faced challenges adapting their homes into learning environments and couldn't rely on stable electricity and internet access. Not all were able to travel to their destinations once classes started, with several universities switching to online learning and destination countries imposing travel bans. We provided additional support to these students, assisting them when they felt distanced from their academic institutions and learning experiences, and ensuring everyone was well prepared for the start of their university careers.

Study Camp
30 students from 28 countries
IELTS baseline (July) - average score 6.2
IELTS endline (October) - average score 7.1

This was our second year holding Study Camp remotely, and we ran an intensive online program with a rigorous curriculum and testing workload.

Students participated in classes such as African Affairs to Exam Preparation, and on average had 3-4 hours of class a day, in addition to out-of-class assignments. We also provided student bonding sessions and 'coffee hour with staff' so that students would have an opportunity to get to know one another in a non-academic setting.

SAT results were positive, with some students achieving as high as 1400. IELTS results were equally promising with students scoring on average 7.0, and multiple students scoring as high as 8.5. Unfortunately, not all students were able to attend these examinations due to cancellations across the continent. We will continue to support these students and guarantee they enroll into their degrees in the future as planned.

2021 Academic Results

94% of Scholars passed the academic year and proceeded to the next academic year



57% of Scholars have achieved "strong academic performance" in their final diploma

A+

13% of Scholars have achieved "outstanding academic performance" in their final diploma



57% of Scholars have achieved "strong academic performance" at the end of the academic year



15% of Scholars have achieved "outstanding academic performance" at the end of the academic year



AAI Scholar 2021 University Destinations

33% of all AAI Scholars got into a university that is in the top 5% of their country of study**

28% of Scholars gained admission to a top 500** university globally.

* Strong and outstanding scores as defined by Ashinaga's Monitoring & Evaluation, based on each country's scoring system.

** According to Times Higher Education (THE)

Scholar Updates



Viona from Kenya is in her fourth year at Doshisha University, majoring in Japanese business and global economy. Her kokorozashi is to support orphaned students through education, and she has already implemented her Ashinaga Proposal by launching Pendo Initiative with her fellow AAI Graduate Friday, from Zambia, this year. Pendo Initiative works in high schools and local community organizations throughout all of Africa to provide young people with career information and opportunities. Its main work includes creating and sharing

career-related information, organizing field trips to higher education institutions and companies, and facilitating career talks with expert guest speakers. The initiative also curates and shares scholarship and internship information, and organizes competitions, community volunteer activities, and lots of other programs beneficial for students.

Viona says that she wanted to launch this initiative to contribute to the world. However, her journey since launching the initiative hasn't been easy. Some students in their partnered school had to be sent home due to unpaid school fees in the middle of the semester. Moreover, as the members of the initiative, including Viona herself, are also students, it has been challenging to balance working for Pendo with university work. They are hoping to have more volunteers soon to meet the demand. Even with some challenges, it has been rewarding to run the initiative. Viona was back

in Kenya to do her internship in the summer, and every time she visited her pilot project sites, she said that "It has lit up my heart to see the students appreciate what the initiative does for them." Even when she is in Japan, she feels her contribution when she sees photos of the Pendo sessions conducted by local members.

Viona reflects that she has gained leadership skills throughout this experience: "I went through periods where I was doubting myself and the position I play at Pendo; however, I comprehend what leadership means much better now." The initiative will be completing its pilot project next year. The Pendo Initiative Team will take some time to analyze their pilot program and make updates on the content to better respond to the needs of the students.

You can check out Viona's amazing work here: <https://www.pendoinitiative.org/>



Mariama is from the Gambia and is in her second year of Global Health and Social Medicine at King's College London. Along with two other Gambi-

an AAI Scholars, she recently started BabaYo Foundation for Maternal and Child Health. The main aim of the foundation is to improve maternal and child health outcomes in the Gambia.

Mariama believes that maternal health is an important indicator of the strength of a health system, and the best way to improve it is to strengthen the entire health system. She plans to do this through improving health care education both formally and informally, robust engagement in related research, and advocating for policy change. Realizing a better health

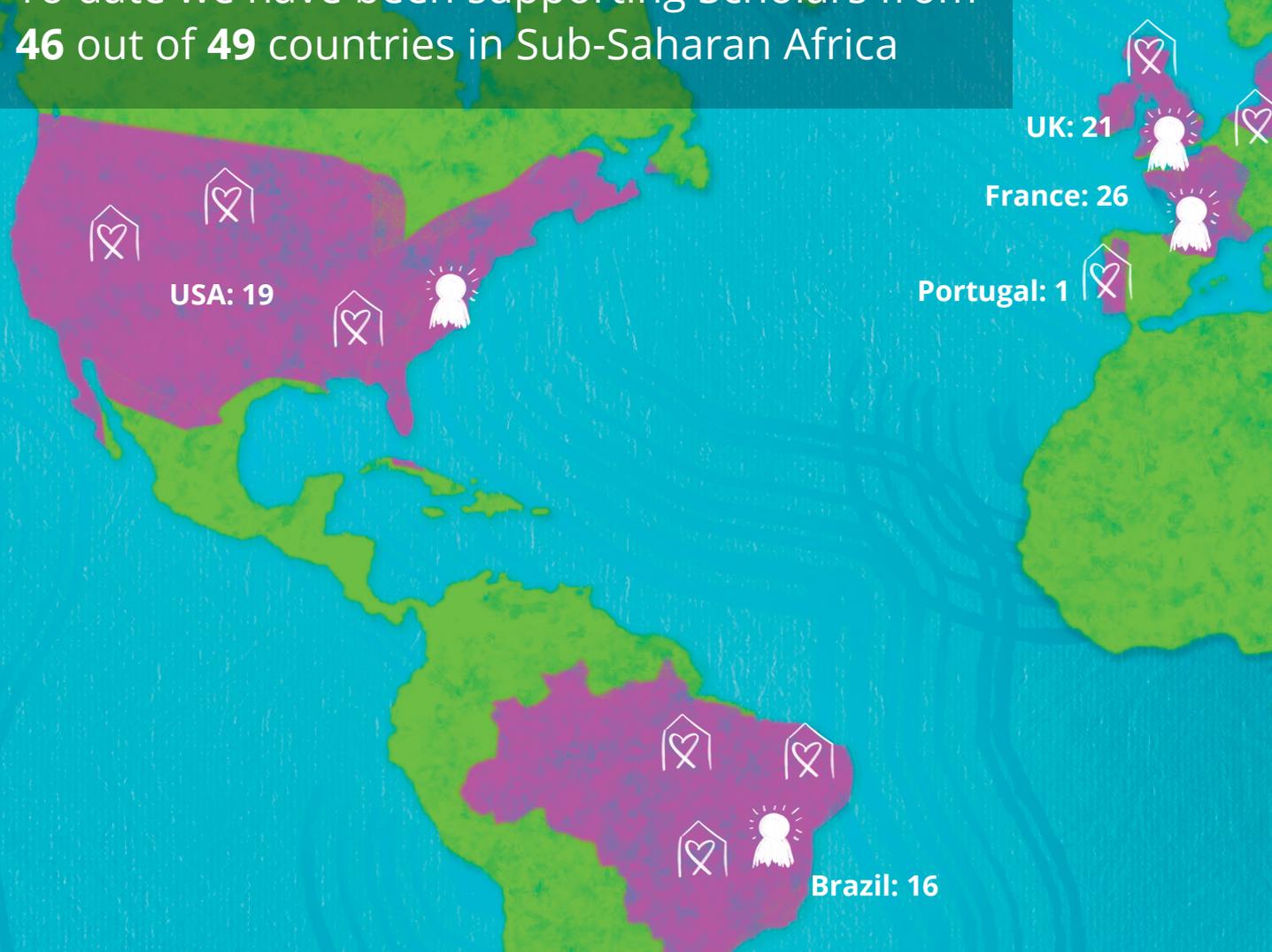
care system in the Gambia is a deeply personal goal for Mariama, as she lost her mother to maternal death.

She says, "Being an AAI Scholar has made it possible for me to study a relevant course that equipped me with the skills necessary to understand the complex relations between the determinants of health. It has also helped me develop my leadership skills. Setting up this foundation is my first step to using my knowledge and skills to benefit my country, the mothers who are dying unnecessarily, and the children whose lives are so affected by maternal deaths."

Scholar Map

The number of AAI Scholars currently at university is **145**, while **47** students have graduated from their degrees

To date we have been supporting Scholars from **46** out of **49** countries in Sub-Saharan Africa



 Regional office
 Scholars at university

 **Lithuania: 1**
Czech Republic: 2


Japan: 57




Australia: 1

Country Representation

Anglophone

Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Kingdom of eSwatini, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Francophone

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Niger, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Togo

Lusophone

Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique

Over the last year, Scholars have been introduced to various career development support systems, which range from mentorship and career coaching to in-house courses that are designed to help them be prepared for their professional development through internships, and then act as a springboard to jobs. Each support system has been specifically designed to help the Scholars self-lead and build their professional capacity by engaging with relevant teams under the Ashinaga Africa Initiative for career coaching, with seasoned professionals through mentorship, and with Ashinaga Partners for internship opportunities.

With that said, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought various challenges which meant that Scholars had to pivot to continue developing themselves and utilizing AAI's support systems. Scholars have worked tirelessly to continue developing their professional capacity through innovative means, from virtual internships to online courses for upskilling. They engaged with Ashinaga internally to explore opportunities but also self-led and created opportunities aligned to their growth independently.

Ashinaga recognizes that several students have taken on career development opportunities and have shown commitment to relentless excellence and growth. AAI is proud of what they have achieved throughout the pandemic and will continue to create an enabling environment that supports their needs for development.

Career Development

Scholars completing
internships in 2021:



13 in-person | 7 remotely

Scholars in
Leadership Positions:



19



Tlalane

Internship in South Africa

Tlalane is a rising third-year AAI Scholar from Lesotho pursuing a Law Degree at the University of Edinburgh. Last summer, she interned with the TEARS Foundation in South Africa, which provides holistic assistance and support to victims and survivors of gender-based violence and sexual assault. Her role involved offering legal advice before referring victims or survivors to pro bono lawyers at the foundation. Beyond providing legal advice, she was involved in raising awareness on gender-based violence and sexual assault. Tlalane's support to the victims and survivors was highlighted by other local knowledge and ability to communicate in English and three other Southern African languages – Sesotho, Setswana, and Sepedi. Overall, it was an excellent experience for Tlalane, who had to deal with not being South African, the challenges of providing legal support, and navigating the nuances between South African and Scottish Law. To her, the biggest takeaway was developing a solution-based attitude.



Sidbénéwendé

Two internships in France and Burkina Faso

Sidbénéwendé is an AAI Scholar studying in his third year of construction civil engineering at the National Institute of Applied Sciences in Toulouse, France. Last summer, he completed two internships, one in France, and one in his home country, Burkina Faso. His first experience was in France with GTM Halle-Vinci Construction, where he worked as an assistant site manager on a 500-million-euro project. He then interned for EMF-Services, where he worked as an assistant site manager to construct a southern bypass of the city of Ouagadougou. Sidbénéwendé's long-term goal is to return home to Burkina Faso to build safe and affordable housing for his community. Eventually, he would like his company to extend to road infrastructures.

Graduate Highlights

During the year 2021, Ashinaga achieved a cumulative total of 47 AAI Graduates. 23 Graduates are working - 6 in Africa and 17 in their countries of study, where they aim to gain necessary skills and experiences before returning home and implementing their *kokorozashi*. 16 Graduates are pursuing higher education, with 1 in Africa and 15 outside Africa. 7 Graduates are currently searching for opportunities.

Given that many AAI Graduates are interested in enrolling in graduate programs, AAI launched a new program called "The Ashinaga Masters in Africa" (AMIA). The aim is to provide AAI Graduates with access to high-quality master's degrees on the continent. AMIA offers graduates from Ashinaga's flagship tertiary education program, the Ashinaga Africa Initiative (AAI), an annual grant of \$3,000 for postgraduate study at top-tier universities in sub-Saharan Africa. There will be ten scholarships available each year starting August 17, 2021. Through AMIA, AAI Graduates will develop skills relevant to the problems that African countries face, learn more about the local professional landscape, and widen their professional network in sub-Saharan Africa.

As they embark on their graduate journeys or professional careers, AAI Graduates are committed to building and maintaining a strong network. Their commitment is facilitated by the Graduates' association led by two AAI Graduates: Friday and Alex. The association allows more engagement from the Graduates by co-designing, promoting, and organizing graduates and alumni events. The AAI Graduates share their experiences and journeys with Candidates and Scholars on multiple occasions such as the Preparation Camp, *tsudoj*, or the Scholar Series. In addition to attending events and connecting with Scholars and Candidates, AAI Graduates support Ashinaga in various other forms. Some Graduates have joined the recruitment team in interviewing Candidates for the new AAI cohorts. Another example is Suzan, an AAI Graduate currently pursuing a master's degree in Tanzania, who has joined the Ashinaga UK board and aims to help shape the program to be more efficient in achieving its vision.



AAI Graduate

Alex

Alex is an AAI Graduate from Kenya. He completed his undergraduate and master's degree in Finance at Clark University in the USA. Alex's *kokorozashi* is to become a financial expert and use his experience in the financial sector to create effective monetary policies to inspire growth and prosperity in his home country. He recently started his job at Bank of America in the UK. After graduation, Alex spent some time volunteering in South Africa, where he worked for a charity called CAST, which offers business and entrepreneurship training to several communities across that nation. During his time there, Alex took part in a project aimed at helping farmers maximize their profits. He would go with the head of the farming program on field trips, where they accompanied small-scale farmers with a variety of tasks, starting from planting and harvesting to selling their produce. They also provided food parcels for families in need, with Alex helping with the packing, delivery, and distribution of the parcels. In addition, he also helped to collect clothing donations from different stores and individuals. The experience increased Alex's desire to be of service to young people on the continent. He hopes to continue giving back to his community in different ways and to work towards his goal of contributing to the development of Kenya and other African countries.

Office Update: Ashinaga Japan

The Ashinaga Foundation Headquarters in Tokyo looked to 2021 with great hopes for stability and a path out of the pandemic. We were able to resume most of our activities and to partially return to the office. However, we were unable to bring new Ashinaga Africa Initiative (AAI) Scholars into Japan this year, due to visa suspension for international students. As of January 2022, 18 Scholars from cohorts 6 and 7 are waiting to enter Japan. Some of the Scholars were forced to defer a semester or even a year of their university, while others were able to join university remotely. Due to the time difference and often poor internet connection in their home countries, these Scholars faced challenges when attending online classes. Ashinaga continued to provide the best possible assistance to the Scholars, enhancing support for their mental health, academics, and finances.

Aiming to create a safe space for AAI Scholars to communicate, collaborate, and acquire new skills, Ashinaga Japan launched the Scholar Series - online webinars and workshops co-created by Scholars, staff, and interns. From May 2021 we were able to host six sessions on various topics including entrepreneurship, the experience of living in Japan for African students, career opportunities, mental health, kokorozashi - or their future dreams - and Ashinaga Proposal.

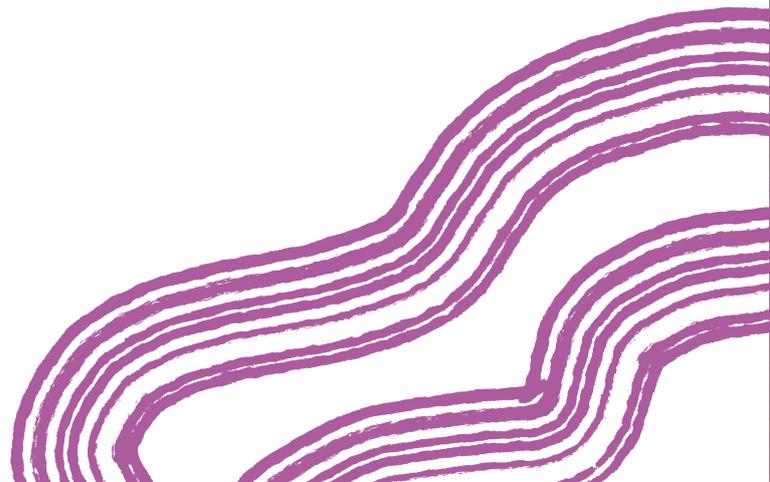
Two AAI Scholars, Kundai and Sam, completed their summer internship with Arkray Inc. Japan, a healthcare and medical device manufacturing company. Kundai, from Zimbabwe, was tasked with finding distributors in African markets and developing product awareness in Africa. The project allowed him to meet with major stakeholders in the medical field in Africa and leaders such as Zimbabwe's ambassador to Japan. Samuel, from Rwanda, was managing social media campaigns for a medical device. His projects included market research and content creation. He was able to apply his knowledge to real-world scenarios, strengthen and develop existing skills, and learn Japan's work culture.

Two other Scholars, Joseph from Côte d'Ivoire and Imran from Niger, had a chance to represent their countries in the Youth4Climate Summit in Milan, Italy, where they worked on the action plans to be presented during the ensuing

COP26 global climate conference. The selection process for the summit was incredibly competitive, with 400 delegates selected from among 8,000 applicants. Both Scholars were happy to have met like-minded youth from other countries and to become part of the important conversation on climate change. Joseph was also selected out of 5,000 applicants to attend the WorldBank Group (WBG) Youth Summit, which took place virtually last June, where he shared the resilience of African countries during the Covid-19 pandemic and his hopes for a sustainable development.

In 2021 seven AAI Scholars successfully graduated from Japanese universities, with two going on to pursue postgraduate studies, and the rest finding employment in Japan with the hope of deepening skills before returning to the African continent. Additionally, three AAI Scholars graduated from Australian universities, with two undertaking full-time employment and one considering postgraduate opportunities. One of the AAI Graduates, Albert, from Benin, received a job offer from Shimizu Kensetsu, one of Japan's leading general construction companies with various projects in construction, architecture, civil engineering, and property services. Shimizu Kensetsu was interested in hiring a young professional to oversee the company's construction projects in Africa. Albert's new job aligns well with his long-term ambition to contribute to the development of not only his own country but sub-Saharan Africa at large, through the development of infrastructure.

Finally, 2021 also marked the year when Ashinaga Japan undertook the mission of strengthening relations with our donors. We started issuing The Africa Report, a bi-annual publication sent to 7,000 Japanese donors who support AAI and other Africa-related activities. We also held the first street fundraising since the beginning of Covid-19, which gathered not only a lot of donations but also substantial press coverage.





Rose

Rosina Mothapo from South Africa is in her third year at Okayama University, majoring in Medical Anthropology. One of the highlights of her year was that she participated in the 4th World Youth Kokorozashi Presentation Competition, and won an award. She was first shortlisted out of 200 applicants, and then was selected as one of the twelve finalists to present her kokorozashi at the competition. Based on her experiences in her home country, which she courageously shared in her presentation speech, her kokorozashi is to build a shelter where women who are infected and affected by HIV will be provided with the necessary support, including mentorship as well as resources for basic needs, and in turn be empowered to realize their full potential.

After Rose's tireless efforts to build her team and officially launch her organization, Tyna Foundation, she challenged herself by not only sharing her personal story but giving a portion of her kokorozashi presentation in Japanese. After the competition, Rose reflected, "the event was a learning experience for me. At first, I was more concerned with the winning aspect of this competition, because I felt like it would validate my future ambition. However, as I attended different sessions before the actual competition hosted by the organizer of the event, I realized that winning is just a bonus. The fact that I was chosen out of 200 applicants meant that I was special already. My concentration shifted from wanting to win to learning and enjoying the process." She was also inspired by the other finalists. Moreover, she is grateful that she met very kind people who are willing to provide her with mentorship since her project has just begun.

We very much look forward to seeing her kokorozashi being realized in the future, and we have no doubt that her project will continue to prosper and provide empowerment to those women who need it in her community.

Partnership Updates

University partnerships in the USA

This year, the US office renewed partnerships with the University of Richmond, an institution with a selectivity rate of 23%. Ashinaga US also established new partnerships with two other universities, University of Miami and Vassar College. The University of Miami is one of the most prestigious state universities in the US, with a selectivity rate of 25%. It has offered a full scholarship of \$334,200 over the next four years to Ashinaga's incoming scholar from Ghana. Ashinaga US has also implemented an MOU with Vassar College by developing relationships with the new Admissions team there.

New partnerships are in progress with other higher education institutions that offer full scholarships, such as Barnard College, Bates College, Berea College, Bowdoin College, Carleton College, Dartmouth College, Pomona College, and the University of Madison-Wisconsin.

University partnerships in the UK

Ashinaga UK is proud to announce significant new partnerships with the University of York and the University of Warwick. Under these agreements, the University of York have pledged over £2.5 million in tuition fee waivers to support 33 AAI UK Scholars over the next six years, and the University of Warwick have pledged over £2.2 million in tuition fee waivers to support 25 AAI UK Scholars over five years. These partnerships both include support for a foundation year, from Kaplan's International Pathway College at York and from the Warwick International Foundation Program, as well as the three-year undergraduate program. This means that AAI Scholars will have the best possible chance to fulfil their potential.

Herbert Smith Freehills (HSF)

Ashinaga is proud to continue the partnership with HSF who provide pro-bono legal support. The collaboration developed this year with a new mentorship program for Scholars studying law, which HSF lawyers volunteer to offer them professional guidance and internship opportunities. HSF has also generously donated to Ashinaga Foundation, Ashinaga UK and Ashinaga France.

Ashinaga Brasil partnerships:

Ashinaga Brasil signed partnerships with Fundação Atena, Djassi Africa, and JICA Mozambique this year. Fundação Atena, an NGO in Guinea Bissau, works to promote gender equality and capacitation programs for women. Scholars will benefit from an eight-week internship with their team.

Djassi Africa is a venture builder whose mission is to train and invest in innovative Africans, particularly in the field of technology. Their bespoke mentorship program for Ashinaga Brasil will allow Scholars to further develop their Ashinaga Proposals with experts from amongst Djassi's extensive network of entrepreneurs. JICA Mozambique offers Scholars the opportunity to join their team in Maputo for eight-week intensive internships, focusing on one of the development projects that JICA is undertaking in the country.

Campus France

Ashinaga is celebrating its fifth year of partnership with Campus France to work together to accompany all its Scholars studying in France. Campus France is also a great help connecting Ashinaga all over Africa to help facilitate the Scholars' university and visa applications before they arrive.

12 MoUs for placements in sub-Saharan Africa

Ashinaga Foundation has worked throughout the year to build its footprint on the continent through partnerships to drive professional development through internships for AAI Scholars, with 16 partnerships that cover 18 countries. This endeavour has resulted in 12 fully signed Memoranda of Understanding across Africa with organizations such as BTL Africa, Partners in Health, Selamta Family Project and others.

Help Young People Change the World

For the last 55 years, Ashinaga has provided access to quality education to more than 110,000 orphaned students worldwide. This was possible thanks to the support of hundreds of volunteers and the generosity of our donors, Ashinaga-sans.

Covid-19 has underlined the urgent need for skilled, compassionate leaders in countries and communities. Among the number of support schemes we provide, the Ashinaga Africa Initiative creates young leaders for Africa, whose impact will ripple out across the world. There are many ways to get involved:

Donate

Invest in talented youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling them to realize their dreams of helping others. Become an Ashinaga-san through a monthly donation or make a one-off gift. Each donation is gratefully received and makes a huge difference.

ashinaga.org/en/support-us/donate/

Partner Through Your Organization

The right internship, mentor, or training could change a young person's life and set them on their career journey. Ashinaga Scholars need opportunities in a wide range of industries and fields.

Find out how your organization can get involved by emailing:

partnerships@ashinaga.org

Fundraise

Each year, a growing number of supporters raise funds for Ashinaga by running a half-marathon, hosting an event, or joining one of our campaigns. It's easy to do, feels great, and changes lives. Your organization may even have a scheme to double the funds you raise.

Find out more on our website:

ashinaga.org/en/support-us/start-a-fundraiser/

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