



970 airlift to world's best varsities

Ivy league schools among top admissions for 113 East Africans joining this year.

Equity Group Foundation (EGF), through its Education and Leadership Development pillar, recently commissioned the airlift of 113 top-achieving scholars who have secured admission and scholarships to join 71 global universities located in 22 countries around the world. 13 of them are joining Ivy league universities.

The students drawn from the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) in four countries – Kenya (86), Rwanda (17), Uganda (8) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (2) have secured scholarships valued at Ksh 2.8 Billion (USD 21.5) for the four-year duration of their undergraduate studies. Each scholar received an additional airlift token of up to Ksh 200,000 from EGF to support their transition into the global universities.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr. James Mwangi challenged the students to be agents of change, leverage knowledge, values and skills they will acquire to help address Africa's development challenges.

2.8Billion

The value in Kenya Shillings (USD 21Million) of 2024 undergraduate scholarships

"As you embark on this journey, remember to stay adaptable and embrace every challenge with integrity. Embrace the journey ahead and be open to different cultures



The Equity Group leadership led by Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman, Dr. James Mwangi (centre) together with the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) scholars.

and perspectives and let your unique qualities shine," said Dr. Mwangi, urging them to build strong networks and innovate to create lasting solutions for their communities **Continues on Pg 4**

RWANDA

Best from Rwanda make airlift cut



ELP Airlift scholars pose for a photo with Equity Bank Rwanda leadership led by Chairman Rtd. Col. Haguma Eugene (4th from left, seated) and Managing Director Namara Hannington (2nd from right, seated) during the airlift ceremony.

Equity Bank Rwanda celebrated the airlift of 17 scholars who will pursue higher education at 17 top global universities. These scholars were part of the third intake of the Equity Leaders Program, which aims to empower academically gifted students from Rwanda with international educational opportunities. Each scholar was provided with an airlift token ranging from RWF 500,000 to RWF 2 million to support their transition to university life abroad.

The scholars' journey so far has been supported by a comprehensive college counselling program, including

coaching on essay writing, university selection, and admissions exam preparation.

Additionally, the bank covered costs for English proficiency tests and SATs, giving these students a competitive advantage in the global academic arena. This support has helped ensure their successful admission to prestigious institutions, including Ivy League universities. Since its launch in Rwanda in 2021, the Equity Leaders Program has positively impacted over 102 students, with many transitioning to esteemed local and international universities.

DRC

DRC's highest achievers destined to greatness



ELP Scholars from DRC.

Two scholars from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), are part of the third Equity Leaders Program (ELP) cohort to receive support from EquityBCDC for further studies in prestigious universities abroad with full scholarships, supporting their development as future leaders. 403 scholars have so far benefitted from ELP since its inception in 2022.

Nurturing the immense potential of Congolese youth, ELP selects the best students who score over 80% on the state exam, demonstrating a commitment to excellence. ELP trains and supports scholars for personal and professional development.

By investing in these young and upcoming talents, EquityBCDC aims to cultivate a new generation of leaders committed to the sustainable development of the DRC.

Sowing seeds for Africa's transformation

Dr. James Mwangi, Executive Chairman, Equity Group Foundation



The Equity Leaders' Program (ELP) is an important initiative of the Equity Group Foundation (EGF) under its Education and Leadership pillar. The program is part of an intentional plan to build the human capital that will be required to lead the transformation of Africa.

The 970 students we have so far sent to top global universities and their over 23,825 counterparts who have attended local universities and TVETs have acquired skills, competencies, experiences and exposures that well-positions them to participate in the transformation of the continent.

To address various socio-economic challenges facing the continent, EGF has established a network for ELP alumni in the enterprise and innovation sectors, assisting them in setting up and expanding their businesses. Those who have completed their medicine courses and have practiced in the medical field, have been supported to set up the region's largest network of outpatient clinics – Equity Afia, with 126 clinics in Kenya and five in the DRC.

Equity's commitment to scholarships, including the comprehensive secondary school scholarships Wings to Fly and the government-funded Elimu Scholarship, has already benefited over 60,000 learners. These strategic investments play a vital role in nurturing the human capital essential for the continent's socio-economic transformation under the ARR. P.

UGANDA



ELP Scholars from Uganda set to join global universities.

Top Ugandans on mission to conquer the world

Eight talented Ugandan students have embarked on prestigious university studies with the full support of the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) as part of the distinguished cohort of 113 East African scholars. These scholars will pursue degrees at world-renowned institutions, empowered by full scholarships. Jackie Baako, who overcame

adversity growing up in a refugee camp, credits the ELP's support system for her acceptance into the Rhein Waal University in Germany to study a Bachelor of Science in International Business Administration. Trevor Paul Egaru, a top student from Gulu, is eager to apply his aeronautical engineering studies at Moscow Aviation Institute (National Research

University) in Russia to benefit Uganda. Meanwhile, Francis Ocen, with a passion for agriculture, aims to transform his community through setting up modern poultry farms after completing his studies at the University of Georgia in the area of Poultry Science. The ELP has positively impacted the lives of 319 scholars since its launch in 2022.



Inspiring bright and promising young scholars since 1998



1. ELP scholars and mentors meet with former President Uhuru Kenyatta and First Lady Margaret Kenyatta at State House, Nairobi in 2015.
2. Dr. James Mwangi, Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman with ELP scholars during Induction in 2024.
3. Lorna Mwangi, ELP scholar at work during paid internship at one of Equity bank branches.
4. Airlift students take a selfie with Dr. James Mwangi, Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman after 2016 commissioning.
5. Dr. James Mwangi addressing ELP scholars during induction in 2024
6. ELP scholars sit for an exam in preparation for their global university entry applications in 2019.
7. ELP scholars exercise during a boot camp in 2019 at Sportsview Hotel, Kasarani.



Dedicated to creating digital jobs

Peter Kironji joined the bank in 2012 after completing his High School education at Njabini Boys High School. He started as a Relationship Officer before transitioning to a teacher in residence at Equity Centers of Excellence. Through the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) bootcamps, Peter successfully applied to study abroad and was accepted at the University of Toronto, where he pursued a degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering as a Mastercard Foundation Scholar.

After graduating in 2018, Peter co-founded an influencer marketing startup in Toronto, which was acquired just 18 months later. He then worked as a Cybersecurity Engineer for three years, gaining experience across various industries. In 2019, he co-founded a venture-backed, Kenyan-based social commerce platform that leverages influencers to help brands effectively reach markets

through social media. Peter gained valuable lessons while working at the bank such as attention to details, customer service, and managing high-pressure situations—skills that have significantly influenced his decision-making and leadership style.

As a Teacher in Residence, he developed a supportive and development-focused leadership approach, guiding teams towards achieving their goals.

Currently, Peter is the co-founder and CEO of Twiva, an influencer-powered social commerce platform that helps brands access markets by utilizing social media influencers to promote and sell goods and services. The skills, experiences, and networks he gained through ELP have been pivotal in his professional journey, enabling him to successfully run Twiva, which is dedicated to creating digital and digitally enabled jobs for young people.



The power of self-belief and a wholesome support system

Grace Munyiri's journey is a powerful example of how self-belief and a strong support system can propel one towards success. With a solid academic foundation from Kamiti and Muthaiga Primary Schools, she continued her studies at Chogoria Girls High School. A turning point came in 2015 when she was selected for the Equity Leaders Program (ELP). This opportunity marked a significant milestone, equipping her with essential skills in professionalism and client interactions that would shape her career.

Grace pursued a degree in Actuarial Science at the University of Nairobi. She later gained valuable work experience at various Equity bank branches. The support from the ELP team was pivotal in her journey, helping her secure a spot at Cardiff University for a master's in data and Analytics.

At the university, Grace took on



leadership roles, serving as the Black and Ethnic Minority Officer and Anti-Racism Officer. Her involvement in the National Union of Students across the UK further broadened her perspectives and inspired her to establish the Cacumator Mentorship Foundation, supporting high school students in their personal development.

Data scientist Innovator emerges technology leader at CIBC

Agnes Nyaboke's journey is a remarkable testament to the power of seizing opportunities, embracing challenges, and leveraging diverse experiences. As an accomplished data scientist and technology leader, Agnes has carved a unique path, marked by a blend of academic excellence and impactful professional contributions.

Her journey started at Kabula

Primary School in Bungoma where she sat for her KCPE and scored 432 out of 500 marks. She was admitted to The Kenya High School where she studied in form 1 and form 2 and joined Maria Soti Education Centre where she did her KCSE and was the top student in Elgeyo Marakwet county after scoring an A of 86 points, this enabled her to join ELP Class of 2014.

Agnes holds an MSc. in Data Science, Technology & Innovation from The University of Edinburgh and a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from The University of British Columbia. Her current role at Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) in the Technology Leadership Advancement Program allows her to work with various teams such as Enterprise Data Technology,

CIBC Innovation Banking, and Capital Markets Technology, where she is recognized as a rising star among the next generation of technology leaders. Serving as the second in command to the Vice President of the Enterprise Data team, Agnes leads a talented group in driving data strategy and innovation, showcasing her leadership skills and commitment to technological advancement.





“Of the 218 ELP scholars who have finished their studies in the US, 47% are working in the top eight global technology companies.”

Dr. James Mwangi, Executive Chairman Equity Group Foundation.



113

2024 ELP Airlift scholars who have secured admission to global universities

970

Scholars from the Equity Leaders Program who have received admission to global universities since its inception in 1998

71

Global universities in 22 countries including the Ivy League universities admit the scholars in 2024

Origin countries of the ELP Scholars



Kenya - 86



Rwanda-17



Uganda-8



DRC-2



ELP scholars in select Ivy League universities

- Harvard University-4
- Princeton University-2
- Columbia University-1
- Brown University-1
- Penn University-4
- Cornell University-1

60,009



Total scholarships (Wings to Fly + Elimu)

8,878



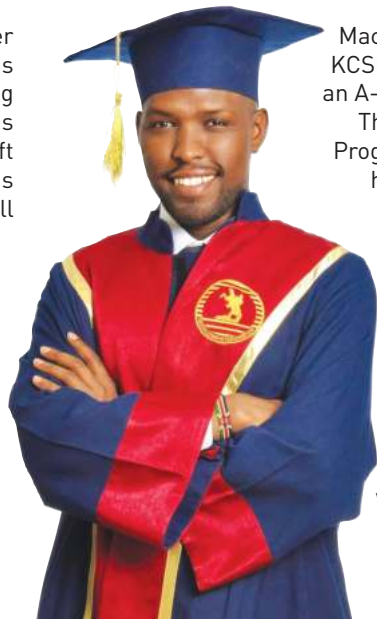
96%

University completion rate

Total Paid Internships

Perseverance and hard work can turn your dreams into reality

Mohammednur's mother believed in education as a way out of poverty. Watching her sew clothes for as little as 20 shillings under a makeshift tent motivated him to excel in his studies. After performing well in his KCPE at Moyale Someni Primary School, he received the Wings to Fly scholarship and enrolled at Alim High School in



Machakos. He later sat for his KCSE in 2016 where he scored an A-.

Through the Equity Leaders Program (ELP), Mohammednur had the opportunity to work at Equity's Moyale branch, which opened doors to even greater opportunities.

Mohammednur later joined Ondokuz Mayıs University in Turkey and graduated with a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree, a testament to how perseverance, hard work, and the support of those who believe in us can turn dreams into reality.

“No matter where we come from, our dreams are always valid.”



ABOVE: Racheal Kimemia, ELP Alumnus at her workstation (INSET) Racheal speaking to the 2024 airlift scholars during the commissioning.

Young engineer thriving in Pan-African projects mentors ELP college freshmen

Racheal Kimemia is an inspiring Equity Leaders Program (ELP) alumnus who embodies the transformative power of education. As both a *Wings to Fly* and an ELP scholar, her journey has been one of determination, resilience, and global exploration. Hailing from a humble background, Racheal joined the *Wings to Fly* program in 2012 after completing her KCPE at Serene Cottage School, Kikuyu. This opportunity allowed her to attend Mugoiri Girls High School, where she excelled in her KCSE exams. She then transitioned into ELP for a paid internship with Equity Bank and the Equity College Counselling Program.

Driven by her ambition to attend a top global university, Racheal secured admission at Ecole Centrale de Nantes (commonly known as Nantes) in France, two years into undertaking her Bachelor of Business Information

Technology (BBIT) at the Technical University of Kenya. She pursued a Bachelor of Science in Engineering, studying across both Mauritius and France. These experiences broadened her horizons and enriched her experiences.

After graduation, Racheal joined Norkun Intakes Limited as a mechanical engineer, registered with the Engineers Board of Kenya (EBK). Her work includes serving clients such as the Equity BCDC branches in Congo. In furtherance of her academic journey, Racheal is soon joining the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom for a Master's program in Globalization, Business, and Sustainable Development.

Addressing this year's cohort of global scholars, Racheal emphasized the power of hard work, dedication, and seizing opportunities.

Perez shines as a person with extraordinary abilities

Perez Ogayo began her educational journey at Eureka Academy in Migori where she performed well and joined Starehe Girls Center from 2012 to 2015 under the *Wings to Fly* program. At Starehe, she excelled in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exams, achieving an impressive A grade.

Perez is a Natural Language Processing (NLP) researcher and Software Engineer currently working at Oracle in California, USA, as a Software Engineer specializing in Machine Learning. She holds a master's degree in Language Technologies from Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA, and a Bachelor of Science with honors in Computer Science from African Leadership University, Kigali, Rwanda.

Her key achievements include: - Contributing to over 15 scientific papers and presenting her research in five countries. Winning the best student research work award during her master's program. Securing a position at Oracle, one of the world's leading technology companies, during a challenging hiring



period. Graduating as the top student in her Computer Science class. Completing a transformative internship at Goldman Sachs in London.

Perez recently obtained an EB-1 visa for individuals with extraordinary abilities, often referred to as the "Einstein visa." This prestigious recognition is a testament to her hard work and contributions to research, granting her permanent residency in the USA.



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Continued from Pg 1 and invest in their ability to overcome challenges and find new approaches. Under EGF's Education and Leadership Development pillar, the scholars who were also onboarded into Equity Bank's paid-internship program, benefited from a comprehensive two-month College Counselling program where scholars received expert guidance on essay writing, university selection, and exam preparation. Additionally, a

week-long bootcamp equipped them with the necessary skills to navigate the transition to university life and thrive as global scholars.

The scholars will be joining universities in different continents across the globe including North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Dr. Mwangi emphasized the role of the scholars in driving Africa's socio-economic growth, particularly within the framework of the Africa Recovery and

Resilience Plan (ARRP) a multi-pronged, private sector driven and holistic solution to achieve social and economic transformation of Africa championed by the Equity Group.

"By establishing your networks and contributing ideas and solutions on how to bolster Africa's economic potential, you can grow trade and investment on the continent, expand markets and accelerate technology adoption to elevate our potential. Your contributions will be instrumental

in creating a more prosperous future for our continent," he said.

Giving further advice to the scholars, Dr. Mwangi remarked that the most effective way of giving back is through mentorship. "As you step into the world, understand that your true wealth lies in the positive impact you create. Your journey is not just about personal success; it's about illuminating the paths for others. Build strong connections, share your knowledge, and give back to your community, letting

your experiences abroad broaden their horizons and also inspire those behind you to create lasting change. Remember, you carry the hopes and dreams of your family and country."



Scan QR code to watch 2024 Equity Leaders Program Airlift Commissioning



Garang Makech Kuol

High school: Baringo Boys High School

University: Bowdoin College, USA

Course: Computer Science and Economics

Garang Makech Kuol's story is one of resilience, determination, and the power of community. Born to refugee parents in the Kakuma Refugee Camp, he faced the harsh realities of displacement and conflict. Yet, against all odds, he emerged as a shining example of what unwavering belief and support can achieve. Both his parents fled the civil war in neighbouring Sudan. After concluding his KCPE at a school in the camp run by UNHCR, Garang joined Baringo Boys High School, where he scored an A of 82 points. Speaking during the 2024 Airlift Ceremony in Kenya, Garang Makech Kuol an ELP Scholar joining

Bowdoin University, USA, to study Computer Science noted, "The support network I found within Equity during my ELP journey has been instrumental to my success. There were times when doubt crept in, but the unwavering belief of the people around me pushed me forward. The Equity team's encouragement was like a steady hand guiding me through challenging moments and its incredible to think about how my life has transformed from the adversity of a refugee camp to securing my place at a world-class university. This journey would not have been possible without the support system that Equity has provided."

Evelyn Wahu Gathara

High school: Alliance Girls' High School

University: Harvard University, USA

Course: Biomedical Engineering

After emerging top girl in her sub-county in the 2018 KCPE, Evelyn Wahu had the privilege of joining Alliance Girls High School where the disruptive Covid-19 pandemic sparked curiosity in her. "I pondered the pace at which Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca were developing vaccines and felt inspired to contribute and want to work at Pfizer. I also asked myself, 'Why not develop vaccines in Kenya?' I realized that I needed to be part of



the solution," she vowed.

Wahu scored an A of 84 points in KCSE and secured admission into the Equity Leaders Program. The support network within Equity became her compass, guiding her through periods of self-doubts and challenges. Her advice to fellow scholars is simple yet profound: "Let's return to use our knowledge for the benefit of our communities."



Modester Sikwa Nanjenya

High school: Precious Blood Girls High School-Kilungu

University: University of Pecs, Hungary

Course: Pharmacy

Modester Nanjenya, the firstborn in a family of five, comes from a humble family background, with education being her only hope for a better future. Despite the tragic loss of her father just before sitting for her Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams, she excelled and became the top student at New Kihimbuini Primary School in Wote, Makueni County.

Her outstanding performance earned her the *Wings to Fly* scholarship, which was a

pivotal moment in her life. "The opportunity allowed me to attend Precious Blood Girls High School-Kilungu," she said during the airlift ceremony.

"My perseverance paid off as I received an invitation to study Pharmacy at the University of Pecs in Hungary," said Nanjenya. She expressed her gratitude, saying, "Thanks to the Equity Leaders Program, I have this golden opportunity. I promise to give it my best and return to transform lives in Africa."

2024 ELP Airlift Commissioning Ceremony at Equity Centre, Upperhill-Nairobi



Dr. James Mwangi, Executive Chairman Equity Group Foundation addressing the airlift scholars.



Meshack Okello, ELP student joining Princeton University to study Computer Science addressing fellow scholars.



A section of ELP scholars follow proceedings during the commissioning of scholars who will be joining 71 global universities.



Some of ELP Scholars joining global universities receive congratulatory letters from Equity Group Senior Management led by Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman, Dr. James Mwangi.