



HIGHER LEARNING

ADAPTING TO SOCIETY'S CHANGING NEEDS

If you have ever been uncertain about where your next tuition fees will come from, you probably know the anxiety, restlessness and frustration that come with that. Yet at times, the help a student needs can come in the form of giving paid-for labour to the institution through work-study programmes.

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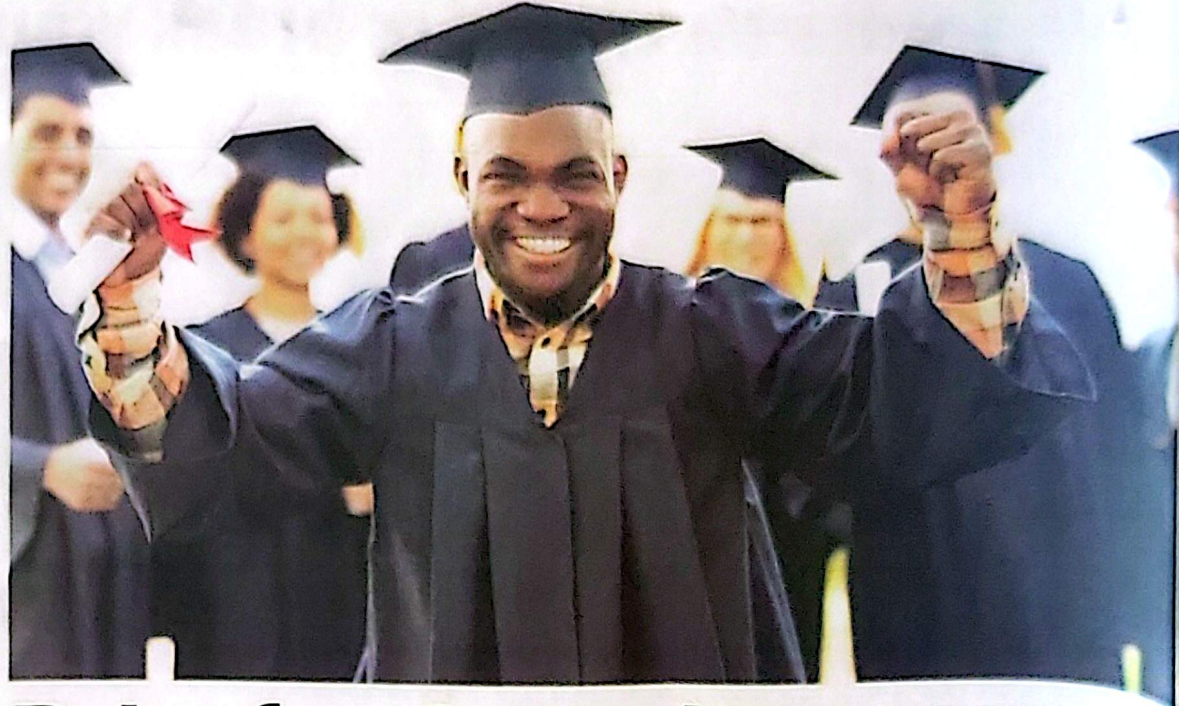
Discouraged by friends

Her friends, she adds, discouraged her from doing such work, moreover in the same university she studied. The others who did not talk, just looked at her with contempt. "So the first few weeks were really hard for me. I would hide every time I was working and saw anyone who knew me, up until I just stopped caring about what anyone said, after all, at the end of the semester, my tuition would be cleared," she says. Indeed, that semester, her tuition was cleared. Do-reen was on the programme for the next two semesters after which, her family resumed paying her tuition.

Saved from a dead year

However, she is not the only student who has benefited from such an arrangement. Barnabus, a student at UCU also applied for the programme after he lost his job in his first semester of the final year at university. "I had two options; to either ask for a dead year or, find another job soon - which was going to be impossible. The work and study programme became my last and only resort," he says, adding that in comparison to his last job, this was really easy to do. "I worked around the dining to clean up after lunch time - and I had no shame doing it. I still had enough time to go for my classes, and to take up another job in the evening to support myself," he adds.

After one semester, Barnabus stopped working for the university because he had found a job that



Raise fees by working for the university

Some universities have programmes where students who cannot afford tuition work for it alongside their academic obligations. NET PHOTO

needed much of his time. He, however, points out that, "Often, students do not know of the availability of such life-saving opportunities that universities offer. But still, for one to be helped you have to speak out your financial challenges - perhaps; there can be help for you."

How it works

At Uganda Christian University, students are hired to work in different non-teaching departments and in turn, the student benefits by having their tuition paid by the university. "It is a programme that students of UCU can apply for. It was specifi-

cally designed to help students who are not doing well in terms of clearing their tuition and so, the money is not given to them in cash form but rather, it is credited on their fees accounts," Ivan Najjuka, assistant UCU spokesperson, says.

"Fortunately, the programme runs on a semester basis, so every semester, we have new students enrolling, while others leave. For example, if you have been on the programme but your financial situation improves the next semester, you can withdraw from the programme," he notes.

Furthermore, when students ap-

ply, the university has a panel that vets them every semester to choose those that qualify. "A student may be a finalist, but cannot facilitate their tuition. On that note, they can enroll on the programme so they do not miss out on completing their studies," Najjuka adds.

Striking a balance

To ensure their classes are not affected, every student is supposed to work two hours a day for five working days. "The students can do their work in intervals of 30 minutes - until they cover the two working hours, or intervals of one hour, or the whole two hours at once," Najjuka explains. Some of the work includes; putting the lecture rooms in order before classes begin, clearing chairs off the compound, shelving books in the library, cleaning offices, helping out in the dining room, serving student's food among others.

At Bugema Adventist University as Rachel Kayondo, the Work Programme coordinator, explains, "The programme targets needy students. The policy is that someone must be admitted, registered at the university, and has paid at least 50 per cent of the tuition."

Kayondo, however, notes that all the available work is manual, such as working on the farm, cleaning around the university and in lecture rooms.

"Because the university has a busy schedule, the student has got to achieve firstly; class require-

HOW IT WORKS

At Bugema. The students create their own convenient time in which to execute the work allocated to them. The rewards are calculated hourly, so if the student is hard working and committed, they can be able to raise a good amount of money - which is deposited on their tuition accounts. Students work for not more than five hours a day for six days in a week.

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ments such as preparing for class presentations, research, course works, and the exams. Students therefore, work for not more than five hours a day for six days in a week," she says.

To further facilitate learning, the students create their own convenient time in which to execute their work. "The rewards are calculated hourly, so if the student is hard-working and committed, they can be able to raise a good amount of money - which is deposited on their tuition accounts," she adds.

Though the programme was designed for students in need of help, some students request to join, just for purposes of getting experience and skills - especially at the farm, Kayondo adds.

VITAL VOICES

Good work ethics



"There are students who are brilliant but do not have the money, and their dreams are shattered. I wish every university can have such an arrangement."

DOROTHY ANGUPARU, STUDENT,
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Hinder performance



"It is a very good programme, however, I think it can affect the performance of the student, because they have to worry about class work and work at the same time."

MUSAASIZI GEOFRY, STUDENT, IJUI

Good idea



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