David Livingstone Award Winner Comes to Strathclyde

Staff in the Department of Civil Engineering have built a strong international reputation for capacity building in health and the environment. The David Livingstone Centre for Sustainability supports universities in many countries to build the skills to protect human health. In Africa, where medical expertise is in short supply, environmental health specialists help families to protect themselves from disease and provide basic healthcare. Staff from Strathclyde who are based in Malawi, have established The Africa Academy for Environmental Health, which has supported the development of the profession through 12 universities in nine countries. The curriculum addresses the most critical needs of water, sanitation and disease control.

Environmental health students in Blantyre, Malawi compete for the David Livingstone Awards, named after the Department’s famous alumnus, known in Scotland and throughout Africa for providing practical and vocal support to Africans in their struggle against disease and slavery. These awards, funded through Strathclyde's Malawi Millenium Project, are given to the best students in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Malawi (Polytechnic) in Blantyre. As well as providing some financial reward, they also inspire enthusiastic students throughout the institution to work hard and gain recognition for their efforts. One student who won the award twice is now studying for an MSc in Environmental Health at Strathclyde. After working with Dr Tracy Morse in the Scotland Chikhwawa Health Initiative in Malawi, Kondwani Chidziwisano was awarded a Commonwealth Shared Scholarship to support his studies in Scotland.

Kondwani shares his experience of studying at Strathclyde with Engineering Insight;

"I first heard about the University of Strathclyde during my undergraduate studies at the University of Malawi (Polytechnic). At the Polytechnic, the best performing students from the Civil Engineering and Environmental Health departments receive the famous ‘David Livingstone Awards’ from the Malawi Millennium Project through Strathclyde. This motivated me to work hard in class in order to be among those outstanding students and I was a two time winner of the award. This opened my mind to start dreaming of studying at Strathclyde. I was always in search of opportunities and then I got a Commonwealth Shared Scholarship to attend Strathclyde to study for the MSc in Environmental Health, I was over-the-moon! After my arrival I realised that I was studying in a diverse community where everyone is friendly and there is extensive academic support. Now I am living my dream.

During my flight to the UK, I was really worried because it would be my first time in Scotland and I had no idea what it was going to be like. However, as soon as I arrived at Glasgow Airport and met some Scottish people, their warm welcome made me feel like I had arrived home.

Glasgow, where the University of Strathclyde is situated, is one of the most beautiful cities I have seen in my life. I really like Glasgow’s impressive historical and modern architecture. The city offers a great night life, especially with restaurants and pubs. Strathclyde campus is very beautiful and the environment has definitely won my heart. Even more beautiful is the fact that the University comprises of a very diverse student body taught by gifted and friendly professors and staff members. I knew the instant I set foot here that this is the place to be!

As soon as I arrived on campus, all my worries were gone. I was surprised at the large number of international students from literally all over the world. My first few weeks in class were even more amazing because I could interact with different students from diverse cultures. Being an international student among many other international students at Strathclyde makes me conscious of who I really am as a person, as a Malawian, and true African. But at the same time it teaches me how to open my mind to those different from me and to embrace these differences. It’s an experience I wouldn’t trade for anything else. I shall ever cherish being a Strathclyder!"

To learn more about the Environmental Health Programme go to [http://www.strath.ac.uk/civeng/pg/envhealth/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/civeng/pg/envhealth/)

To watch a video about our Environmental Health work with the Polytechnic University of Malawi, see [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viaGojnvvVE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viaGojnvvVE)