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The Office for International Affairs is proud of Buhle Hlatshwayo, who has been selected for the 2023 Fulbright programme.

Buhle Hlatshwayo, a master's student on the UFS Qwaqwa Campus, has been selected for the 2023 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) programme. Despite initially doubting herself, she took a leap of faith and applied for the programme, which turned out to be a successful decision. The Fulbright Programme is a prestigious scholarship programme that provides opportunities for international educational exchanges. The programme's overarching aim is to enhance intercultural relations across more than 160 countries.

Hlatshwayo will be teaching isiZulu at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia, for an academic year. She leaves South Africa at the end of July.

Hlatshwayo is currently pursuing her Master of Arts with specialisation in English on the UFS Qwaqwa Campus, where she also completed her undergraduate and honours degrees in the same field. Her research focuses on East African Arab migration narratives to the Global North, with a focus on exploring the legacies of colonialism. She is also a learning facilitator in the same department.

A prestigious opportunity

A friend and colleague, Mxolisi Mabaso, encouraged her to apply, knowing her desire to explore opportunities abroad.

"I am still in awe of how this opportunity came about, especially because someone else saw potential in me while I didn't believe in myself. My good friend pushed me to apply, because he knew I always wanted the opportunity to go abroad. I am thrilled and honoured to be part of this prestigious

programme. I am looking forward to experiencing the US culture and ways of being.”

On her love for English, Hlatshwayo said she has always been fond of the subject but never considered it as a potential career path. After completing her undergraduate degree, Dr Kudzayi Ngara, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English on the Qwaqwa Campus, encouraged her to pursue an honour’s degree in English, which ultimately shaped her academic journey.

Professional and personal growth awaits

While in the US, Hlatshwayo said she is looking forward to immersing herself in American culture and pursuing courses in American studies. She aims to learn more about diverse cultural backgrounds and share her South African heritage and cultural values with the international community. She said this exchange of experiences and ideas will broaden her horizons and contribute to her academic and professional development.

“The opportunities would not present themselves if you were not capable. If you know your goals, seize any opportunity that will enable you to get there. I was not granted this opportunity because I’m smarter than everyone else, but because of how I articulated my genuine motivations with future goals and how the Fulbright programme will help me achieve them,” she said.

The Office for International Affairs’ portfolio of scholarships and marketing promotes opportunities for staff and students interested in studying abroad, and the Fulbright programme is one of the many agencies that offers opportunities for staff and student at UFS to study abroad.

For more information regarding this prestigious programme, visit the link provided <https://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/>