

NIGERIAN STUDENT COMES TO AU WITH OLYMPIC DREAMS



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Toluwani Adebakin is from Lagos, Nigeria, the largest city in Africa. Last fall, he came to the much smaller city of Anderson, Ind., to study and run track at Anderson University. Attending college in a small town in the United States was a huge culture shock for the freshman business management major. Fortunately, he had been given a great sense of comfort through his love for

track and field. After talking to AU’s coaches and doing some research about the school, he decided to enroll at AU without ever setting foot in the United States.

“Although it was a difficult decision, I chose AU because I feel that this school provides a great environment for me to learn and grow as a person in all aspects of my life,” said Adebakin.

One of those aspects is his faith. Luckily, going from The Redeemer’s International Secondary School, a Christian institution founded in 1997, to the Christian environment of Anderson University was not a difficult transition for the young sprinter. What truly presented itself as a challenge was adjusting to living away from his loved ones.

“The fact that I can’t see my family every day has definitely been hard for me, but AU has made the transition easier,” said Adebakin. “This school has a very welcoming culture, and I’ve really enjoyed meeting new people and creating good friendships.”

Another difficult transition has been adapting to what he describes as the “extremely cold” weather of Indiana. Seeing snow was certainly a stunning experience that many international students can identify with.

However, what sets Adebakin apart is his exceptional talent for running. He experienced much success during his first-ever indoor track season. The season was highlighted by a runner-up finish in the 4x200-meter relay at the conference championships and respectable marks of 22.92 seconds in the 200-meter dash and 6.33 meters in the long jump. Adebakin has set high goals for himself and firmly believes that AU is the place that can help him achieve his dreams.

“I hope to use my time at Anderson to learn all that I can, form lasting friendships and rank highly in track. After college, I hope to return home to represent my country in track and to use my business degree to help further my career.”

To follow Adebakin and the Raven track and field team, visit athletics.anderson.edu —DEREK MALLORY

FACULTY Q&A

Dr. Timothy Fox: *Spreading love for culture and language*

Dr. Timothy Fox BA ’82 is a professor of Spanish and chair of the Anderson University Department of Modern Languages and Cultures. His students admire his down-to-earth personality and his ability to connect with people on a personal level. Fox models a hands-on approach with teaching and offers an exciting, new way of learning.

How do you immerse your students in Spanish-speaking environments?

Along with in-class lectures and conversation tables, we offer a Spanish chapel that is held at Miller Chapel on Tuesday nights. Students majoring in Spanish and who are in Spanish classes run the chapel. We also have a language immersion night once every semester, where we focus on a country. Usually, we ask someone who has just returned from studying abroad to talk about their experiences. We completely immerse ourselves in that culture and speak Spanish the whole night.

What do you enjoy most about studying other cultures?

We like to look at the 3 P’s of culture: perspectives, products, and practices. We love to compare them from culture to culture. This is one of my favorite things about studying different areas of the world. I like to see what we have in common with these cultures, being God’s children and within a common humanity. I also like seeing the differences. It helps students to learn and value their own culture.

Why is learning about cultures important for college students?

The more we understand and communicate, and not only coexist but actually thrive and interact, the better off the world is going to be. This will create more opportunities for students for jobs, travel, ministry, and service. The more you understand cultures, the more you will enjoy the world.

If you weren’t a professor, what would you be?

I always joke with my wife about having my own chicken farm. This may sound crazy, but I would love to live in a place like the Dominican Republic and basically create a property that is totally self-sufficient. It would run on solar and wind energy, growing my own crops and raising my own animals. This wouldn’t be like survival of the fittest, but more of how can we live simply. —LIAM CRAYS



FUN FACTS

Favorite food:

I just like to eat. There is little that I do not like to eat. I do love eating food from different parts of the world.

Biggest role model:

My parents. They were Church of God ministers. I saw the sacrifices they made, but I also saw a great number of blessings. As for famous people, I admire Martin Luther King, Jr. In regards to someone at Anderson University, it would have to be Dr. Merle Strege. He’s a man who really walks the walk and talks the talk.

Favorite Bible Verse:

John 3:17

How many different countries have you been to?

I have been to at least 20 countries, including all over the Caribbean, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Spain, England, France, and Morocco.

Favorite Destination:

Spain