

CHRISTINA WELSH (PHILOSOPHY) '16

# ASHINAGA UGANDA

(NANSANA, UGANDA)

# ABOUT ASHINAGA

- Ashinaga is a non-profit organization headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. Ashinaga Uganda was established in 2001.
- Ashinaga's goal is to provide education support to children worldwide who have lost parent(s).
- I mainly worked under Ashinaga's "100-Year Vision for Africa." Announced in 2012, it aims to provide bereaved children with the education that they require to return to their homes as leaders in the fight against poverty, corruption, and exploitation. The vision is to select one gifted but needy student who has lost one or both parents from each of Africa's 49 Sub-Saharan nations and support them to attend the world's top-ranked universities.

# OUR TEAM

- about 6 full time staff (half Ugandan, half Japanese) working in the office
- about 12 interns from around the globe (primarily from UK and USA)
- our focus was entirely on preparing 22 scholars to be university-ready academically, socially, emotionally, etc., and to apply to these universities

# MY ROLE

- I was an official buddy (providing emotional support and just all-around being there) for 3 scholars, but ended up mentoring, supporting, and spending significant time and energy with many scholars.
- I was an official application mentor and college counselor for 2 scholars, but ended up helping many people with their research, personal statements, etc.
- My main teaching responsibilities were as the SAT Writing teacher and SAT Critical Reading teacher for about 12 students.
- I taught a Global Awareness class on gender.
- Along with another intern and intern leader, we installed 2 solar energy systems (solar suitcases from We Share Solar).
- I was assigned to be responsible for photos + videos for Ashinaga Uganda 100 Year Vision
- I took it upon myself to be the social point person of the Juku. I organized a trip to Lake Victoria for the days, organized multiple movie nights, took the scholars to play pool, organized football scrimmages, etc.





spaces. I spent most of my 2 months within this compound, except to sleep in the intern house which was only a 2 minute walk a





Me and Terakoya kids





Me and Terakoya kids



Me,  
Prudêncio  
(scholar from  
Mozambique),  
Mama Rebecca  
(Ashinaga's  
Matron)







Me and Mama Rebecca  
(Ashinaga's Matron)





Me and my buddy and application mentee, Jenipher (scholar from Tanzania)





Me and Prudêncio  
(scholar from Mozambique)





Sakiinah (scholar from Mauritius), Jenipher (scholar from Tanzania), and me in the office





Bernard (scholar from Malawi), Me, Abel (scholar from Botswana), Sakiinah (scholar from Mauritius)





Me and Mama Rebecca  
(Ashinaga's Matron)





Me and Mama Sarah  
(Ashinaga's Cook)





Scholar and Interns at a picnic





Scholar and  
Interns after  
going for a  
picnic





Scholars and Interns posing for a photo before saying goodbye to Justin (intern)





Me and Pepe  
(scholar from  
Swaziland)

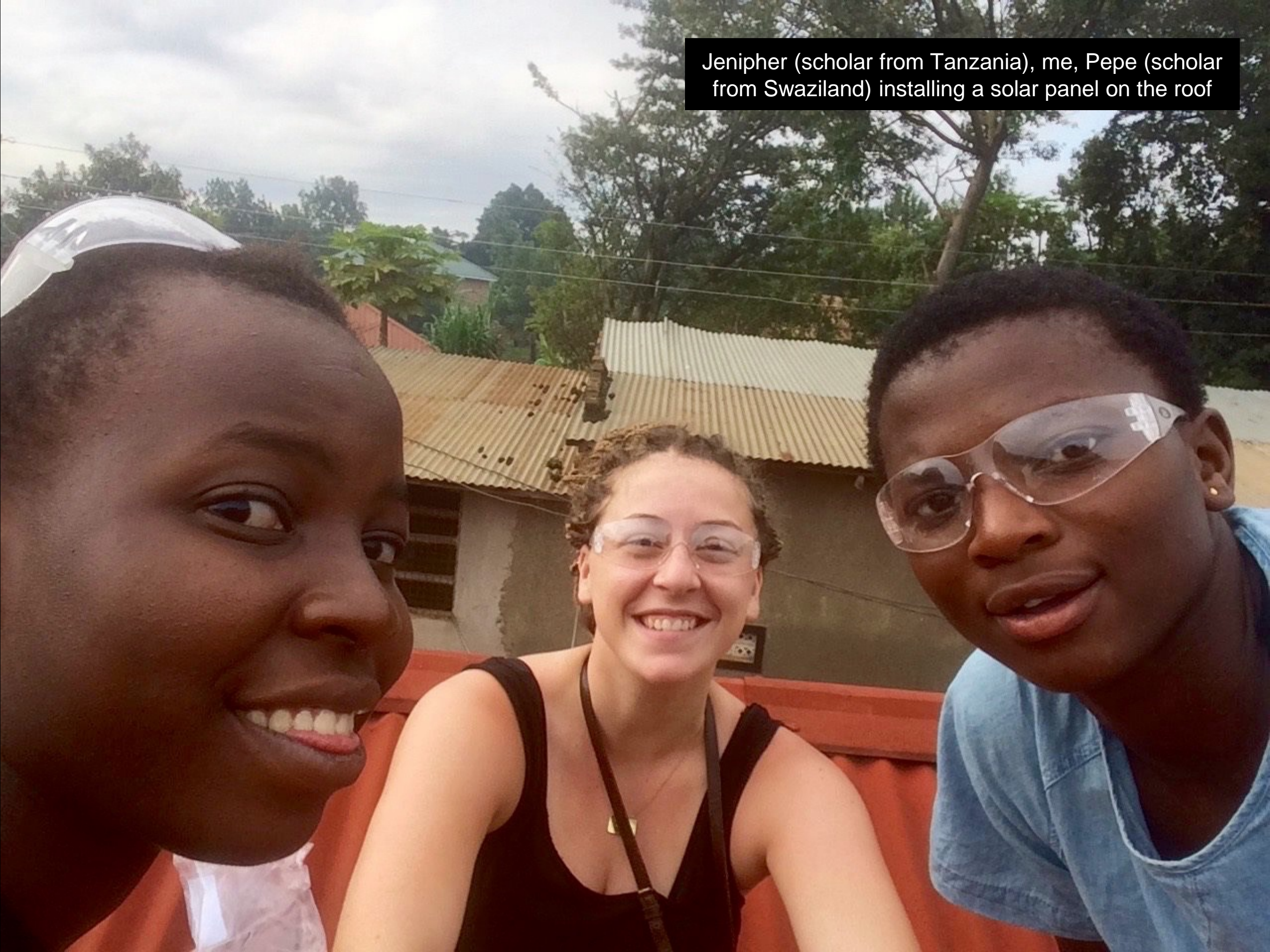


Me and Pepe (scholar from Swaziland)  
installing a solar panel on the roof





Jenipher (scholar from Tanzania), me, Pepe (scholar from Swaziland) installing a solar panel on the roof





Jenipher (scholar from Tanzania), me, Pepe (scholar from Swaziland) installing a solar panel on the roof





Pepe (scholar from Swaziland) and Alex (scholar from Kenya) installing a solar panel on the roof





Abel (scholar from Botswana) and Bernard (scholar from Malawi) at the solar installation location







Sakiinah (scholar from Mauritius), Alex (scholar from Kenya), Tobi (intern) with We Share Solar shirts on the day of the solar system installation





Prudêncio (scholar from Mozambique) showing Ryan (intern leader) the instrument he made from wire and wood





thiopia), Sakiinah (scholar from Mauritius), Christine (staff member), and William (scholar from Lesotho) at the Opening Ceremony





William (scholar from Lesotho) and Abel (scholar from Botswana) at the Opening Ceremony of the Kokoro Juku





...olar from Zimbabwe), Haftu (scholar from Ethiopia), Lambert (scholar from Rwanda), and Djazé (scholar from Ivory Coast) at the



Prudêncio  
(scholar from  
Mozambique),  
Lambert  
(scholar from  
Rwanda), Abel  
(scholar from  
Botswana),  
Didier (scholar  
from Togo) at  
the Opening  
Ceremony for  
the Kokoro  
Juku







Students and Interns at the Opening Ceremony of the Kokoro Juku



Ryan  
(intern  
leader) and  
Terakoya  
child at the  
Opening  
Ceremony  
of the  
Kokoro  
Juku





Aoife (intern leader from England), Lerato (scholar from South Africa), Salimata (scholar from Ivory Coast), Christelle (intern from France) at the Opening Ceremony of the Kokoro Juku





Didier (scholar from Togo),  
Abel (scholar from Botswana),  
Lambert (scholar from Rwanda),  
Prudêncio (scholar from Mozambique)  
at the Opening Ceremony of the Kokoro Juku







Didier (scholar from Togo) and Prudêncio (scholar from Mozambique) playing soccer on Sports Day





Prudêncio (scholar from Mozambique) and Annet (scholar from Uganda) at Sports Day





Hilary (scholar from Kenya), Pepe (scholar from Swaziland), Djazé (scholar from Ivory Coast) on Sports Day





Scholar, Interns, and Staff for a group picture on Sports Day





Jenipher (scholar from Tanzania) on Sports Day





Idriss (scholar from Burundi) and Cyrus (staff) on Sports Day





Haftu (scholar from Ethiopia) on Sports Day



William (scholar from Lesotho), Abel (scholar from Botswana), Sakiinah (scholar from Mauritius), Jerry (scholar from Ethiopia) at Sports Day







Prudêncio (scholar from Mozambique) at Sports Day





Didier (scholar from Togo) playing football at Sports Day





The two teams bowing to each other after the football game at Sports Day





Abel (scholar from Botswana) at Sports Day





Students and Interns at Sports Day





Friday (scholar from Zambia)





Imaculada (scholar from Angola) and Jerry (scholar from Ethiopia)





Alex (scholar from Kenya), Jerry (scholar from Ethiopia), and Imaculada (scholar from Angola) on beach day





Tobi (intern from Princeton), Alex (scholar from Kenya), Sakiinah (scholar from Mauritius) on Beach Day





students before beach day





students before beach day





students enjoying the water at Lake Victoria on Beach Day





students and interns playing football on Beach day





Lambert (scholar from Rwanda) and Abel (scholar from Botswana) on Beach day





Christelle (scholar from France), William (scholar from Lesotho), Justin (intern from England), Abel (scholar from Botswana), Prudêncio (scholar from Mozambique)





Pepe (scholar from Swaziland), Jenipher (scholar from Tanzania), Juniour (scholar from Zimbabwe)





Jerry (scholar from Ethiopia) and Imaculada (scholar from Angola)



Abel (scholar  
from  
Botswana)  
and Sayo  
(staff) at a  
salsa lesson  
led by one of  
the interns





# IIP'S IMPACT ON ME

- Through my experience with Ashinaga I know that for a career, I need to be working with people, not chained to a computer at a desk. I especially would be interested in working with young people. However I do not love academics; I would not want to be an English teacher. I just do not love the subject of English enough to be a teacher of English. However, I did love teaching my Global Awareness class on gender (although it was only 4 hours long). My favorite time, and the time where I think I am performing my best and helping me the most is when I am 1 on 1 or in small groups. I especially loved being a counselor and a “Buddy” where I got to know the scholars very well and got to know their personal, vulnerable, and intimate thoughts or stories. Therefore, I think a career in social work would be the most ideal path I can think of as of now.



# MY EXPERIENCE

- I worked 7 days a week and most of the time worked from 8am - 10pm. I did not really take time to exercise, read, or relax but it was my choosing. I could not say no when the scholars asked for my help and I genuinely just wanted to spend all my time with the scholars and pour my entire self into the experience. I spent all my time for 2 months with the scholars. I am not sure exactly why, but I feel that I connected better with the scholars than I do with most people at Princeton.



# MOST REWARDING

- My most rewarding moments were with the scholars. Multiple times, scholars individually came to me and ended up crying and sharing their troubles. On the day I left, I felt entirely undeserving and unworthy of the scholars' words and the letters they wrote me about how thankful they were for me everything I had done for them. I was incredibly touched by their words, to know how much I impacted their lives and how much I mean to them.



# CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Ashinaga is an incredibly unique organization, I feel extremely lucky to have been a part of it for 2 months.
- I cannot quantify or express the personal growth or the impact this IIP has had on me. I just feel so honored and lucky to have had this experience.
- I am not quite sure exactly why, but I became friends and connected with the scholars better than I do with most people at Princeton. I love them so much.