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UCT law student selected for prestigious Yale University Fellowship

University of Cape Town (UCT) Law PhD candidate Elkanah Babatunde is off to Yale University in the United States (US) after receiving the prestigious Yale Fox International Fellowship.

While searching through potential UCT exchange programmes, a friend suggested that Babatunde contacts the International Academic Programme Office (IAPO), where he learned about the Fellowship.

Having only recently submitted the proposal for his PhD, Babatunde – who had only one week to do the application – fortunately had most of the documents ready and managed to complete his application just in time. His research will look at law and environmental security, focusing on the Paris Agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This agreement deals with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance.

The US has just pulled out of the Paris Agreement because the presidency believes that it places too much burden on their country, while excusing others.

“So, perhaps my research will help to understand, first of all, how does the Paris Agreement work? And then, ultimately, how can it work better?” remarked Babatunde.

With his background in law and a particular interest in the social implications of industrialisation on the African continent, Babatunde hopes to refine his research during the fellowship and develop skills that could benefit his career post-PhD. Although he loves academics and teaching, Babatunde is looking into pursuing environmental policy-making in Africa after the completion of his studies.

With research focusing on environmental security, in terms of the Paris Agreement and whether there is an African position on climate change, Babatunde will no doubt provide some substantial topics for debate and discussion.

The Yale Fox International Fellowship Programme is hosted by the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale and was originally established to enhance mutual understanding between the United States and other countries.

UCT became a partner in 2005, one of only two institutions from Africa – out of a total of 16. Each year, scholars from the 16 institutions set off for Yale, while Yale sends its successful scholars out to the same institutions.

Note to editors



Image: Elkanah Babatunde Credit: Lerato Mokhethi

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