



OLUWATOMIWA OLUWASOLA

HALSEY SCHOLAR
JUNIOR AT SYA SPAIN

TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR INTERESTS

Growing up in a Christian and Nigerian community and going to schools with different backgrounds, there is a lot of diversity in my life. I have always spent time around older people, which taught me a lot about respect and maturity, causing me to gravitate toward clubs like social justice committee and student government association. I also enjoy dancing, gymnastics, soccer, swimming, basketball, softball and volleyball.

WHAT MADE YOU APPLY TO SYA?

I was always interested in Spanish, but because of financial restrictions at my past school, I was only able to learn Spanish from learning sites like Rosetta Stone. Once I transferred to Morristown-Beard School in the seventh grade and began taking real Spanish classes, I quickly fell in love with the language. After two years of classes, my sister, Titilope Ogunsola FR'14, started encouraging me to look into SYA as a way to improve and expand my abilities with the language.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR YOUR SYA EXPERIENCE?

My deepest desire for my SYA experience is to gain more confidence in my speaking and comprehension abilities. I have always enjoyed assisting people who don't speak English, so I am hoping that I can return to the U.S. as fluent as possible so that I can assist others with more accuracy. I also hope that I can come out of this year with great friends, new connections, and a deeper understanding of Spanish culture.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO?

I am most looking forward to the enriching Spanish classes dedicated to language and culture. I imagine that we will spend classes diving deep into the rich history of Spain by touring the city and going to visit museums. Outside of the classroom, I am also excited to make friends within and outside of the program, either through sports, classes or in the community. I am always excited to meet new people.

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT AS YOU PREPARE TO EMBARK ON YOUR SYA YEAR?

This is my first time traveling outside of the U.S. since I was an infant, so I have been experiencing quite a few emotional moments. Sporadically throughout the day, I realize that I am leaving for a substantial amount of time, and while I do get sad, I just think about the great things I will learn and live through because of this awesome opportunity. As a junior, I am also worried about the college application process, but I know that SYA has a great tutoring and guidance program and I am very eager to start taking advantage of that.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THE DONORS WHO MADE THIS EXPERIENCE POSSIBLE?

To all the donors who granted me this scholarship and have made this experience possible, thank you. I remember on March 5th listening to the voicemail from SYA and being so overwhelmed with happiness. It was a moment that I will always cherish because it marked the beginning of an important journey. My entire family and I thank you for the opportunity, the funding and the kindness that you all have shown us. I am grateful that all of you deemed me a worthy recipient of the Halsey Scholarship.