

SEWANEE **AROUND THE GLOBE**

The newsletter for the Office of Global Citizenship

| *Preparing students to shoulder the responsibility of global citizenship*

May 2020: COVID-19 Edition

As the coronavirus upends life as we know it, Sewanee Around the Globe highlights some of the changes and challenges while also celebrating everyday life. Read politics professor Dr. Amy Patterson's insight into the coronavirus in Africa, biology professor Dr. Clint Smith's explanation of the challenges of zoonotic viruses (such as COVID-19), Hoang Le C'22's quarantine story, and about the challenges Ezechias Nshimiyimana C'21 faced to study abroad...only to have to return early. You'll also find profiles of School of Theology professor The Rt. Rev. Dr. James Tengatenga and international transfer student Lucas Carvalho C'22. While the culprit is a virus, the stories are very human. Read on to find out more!

A Window into COVID-19 in Africa

Dr. Amy Patterson, Professor of Politics

When the first COVID-19 cases emerged in China in late 2019, I was a Fulbright scholar in Tanzania, conducting research on mental health policy. Few Africans seemed to be paying much attention to the outbreak, until African governments refused to help their students in China return home. With no cases in January and most of February, Africa seemed to have dodged the proverbial

COVID bullet. Underlying public nonchalance, though, was a worry, as my interviews with health-care professionals signaled. Tanzania's health system is fragile, lacking sufficient medications, hospital beds, and health-care professionals. Access to care is difficult for the 70 percent of Tanzanians in rural areas. Tourism generates significant



revenue in East and Southern Africa, meaning a decline in visitors would harm those countries' economies. By mid-March, the virus surfaced throughout Africa, brought by travelers from Europe and the USA.

As someone who studies global health politics, I think responses to COVID-19 in Africa illustrate some positive learning from the West African Ebola outbreak of 2014-2015. Unlike the months of denial with Ebola, African governments and the WHO acted swiftly on COVID-19. They benefited from seeing the virus's effects in other regions. Even before African cases, the WHO helped implement temperature screenings at ports of entry. Leaders discouraged handshaking and encouraged handwashing. On the day after Tanzania's first case (March 17), the government ordered all schools and universities to close for a month. Some directives, though, were problematic. People in Dar es Salaam – Tanzania's largest city with over 5 million—laughed at the impossibility of social distancing on public transportation.



However, some responses could repeat the mistakes of the Ebola response. Lockdowns, border closings, curfews, bans on international flights, and mandatory 14-day quarantines have a public health logic, but citizens are more likely to accept these actions when they trust the

government that implements them. In Africa, people tend to trust informal institutions (religious leaders, chiefs) more than governments. When West African governments used similar measures, people evaded them to go to work or to buy food, fearing starvation over Ebola. Teenage pregnancies and gender-based violence increased in West Africa after governments closed schools during the Ebola outbreak. Will the same pattern happen with COVID-19? Given the significant economic and social stresses associated with this pandemic and the lack of social safety net to protect Africa's most marginalized citizens, COVID-19 will have long-term effects for the health and development of African populations.

The Challenges of New Zoonotic Viruses Around the World

Dr. Clint Smith, Assistant Professor of Biology at Sewanee



Most viruses infecting humans are zoonotic, meaning that the viruses originated from non-human animals. The emergence of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), exemplifies this, as do the six known species of Ebola virus, HIV-1 and HIV-2, Zika virus, Chikungunya virus, and the 600,000 to 800,000 potential zoonotic viruses estimated to exist across mammal and bird hosts.

SARS-CoV-2 also illustrates the scientific challenges of understanding new zoonotic viruses on the timescale required to guide policy. Case fatality ratios, mode(s) of transmission, and health and demographic correlates of disease severity all require data collection and analysis, a time-consuming and rigorous process. Acquiring these data rely on readily available and accessible testing, consistent clinical case definitions, and transparent, global sharing of data.

Testing can inform policy decisions, but testing capacity and accessibility vary between countries. US testing was hindered by restrictive clinical case definitions, defective reagents, and underfunded public health entities. Restrictive testing conserves resources through prioritization but limits the collection of vital epidemiological and clinical data. Data from less restrictive testing in Germany, South Korea, Singapore, and Iceland could help expand the clinical case definition and illuminate the prevalence of asymptomatic infections. These epidemiological data points will be important for navigating a post-lockdown world, especially without a vaccine.

Ultimately, the rapid testing and effective responses in Singapore and South Korea are likely borne of experience from past epidemics: Nipah virus, SARS-CoV, and MERS-CoV. The lower estimated case fatality ratios in Germany can be attributed, at least partially, to a high number of hospital beds per capita and early collaboration between government and private entities.

With the exception of four influenza pandemics, HIV-1, and HIV-2, the US has been spared during the 119 years since the first human virus was identified. Thousands have died in West and Central African countries during the twenty outbreaks of Ebola Virus Disease since 1976, not to mention the millions who have died from AIDS. Epidemics and pandemics are rarely considered a US problem; they are often perceived to be the problem of other countries.

Anthropogenic factors will continue to increase the emergence of zoonotic viruses. Worldwide virus surveillance, such as the [Global Virome Project](#), could help mitigate the risk of future pandemics, or at least decrease response time. This will require global cooperation but also the building of local capacity for surveillance and rethinking the top-down, generalized approaches of global health.

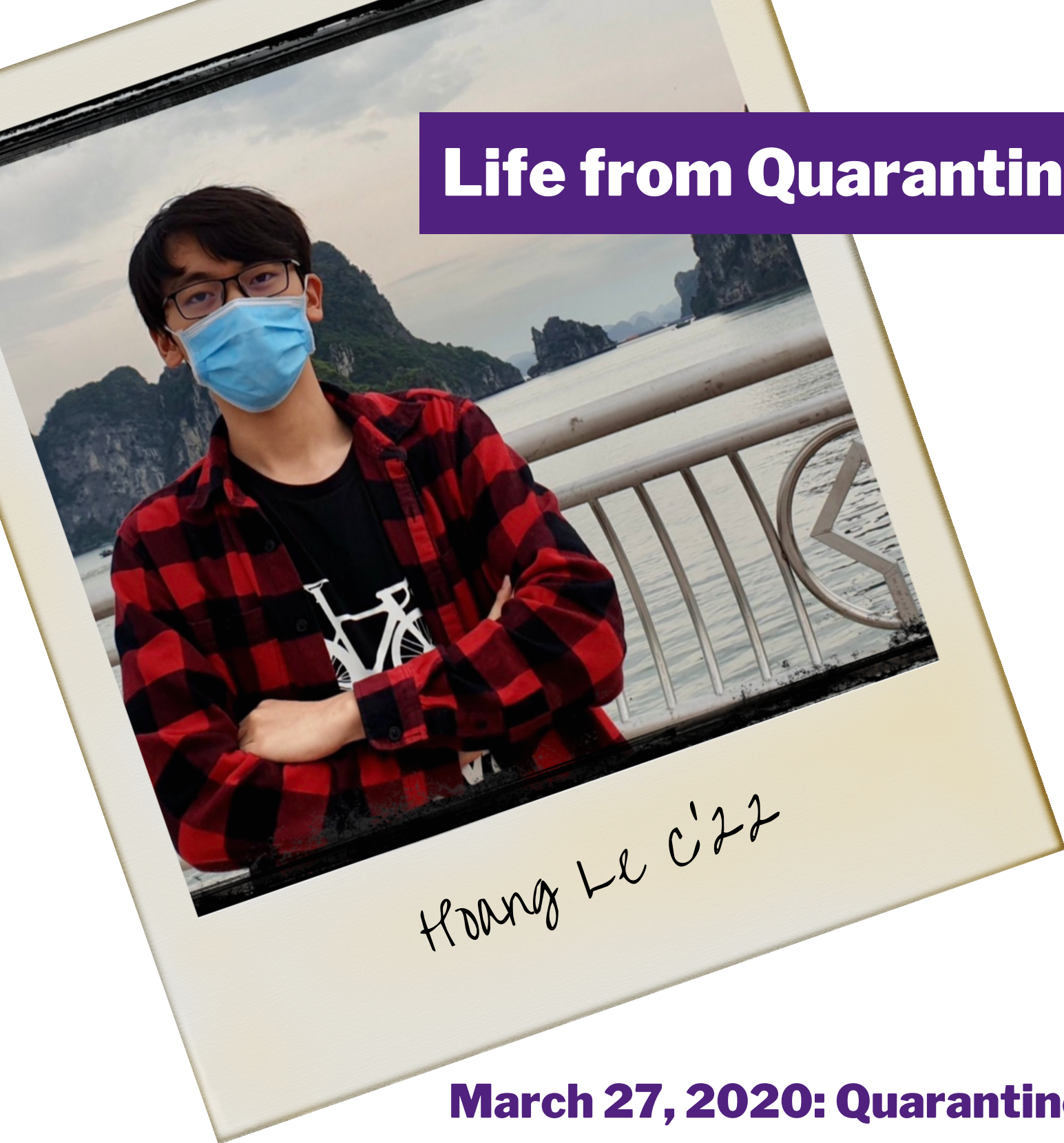
In late March and early April in Sewanee, spring builds and swells like the buds on the trees. Color bursts from the branches: purple-pink on the red buds, white and pink on the dogwoods, white and pink on the magnolia trees. The early spring green, yellower and more varied than the greens of summer, highlights the riot of color. Campus teems with students enjoying the change of the seasons.

Except this year, it doesn't. The trees put on their same brilliant show, but the audience is smaller, with fewer than ninety students remaining on campus. Most domestic students returned home for spring break, coming back to campus only briefly, if at all, to gather their belongings before returning to the comfort of their own homes to finish the coronavirus-altered semester with their families.

For most international students, however, returning home was cause for more uncertainty than remaining on campus. What if they couldn't return in the fall? What if travel bans were still in place, or what if they needed a new visa and the consulates were closed? How expensive would tickets be in this time of minimal travel? How hard would distance learning be from such a distance, with time changes and other internet difficulties? So for now, many are on campus, visiting McClurg for the two hot meals offered a day, enjoying spring's display in a more private showing.

But some international students did return home, facing unexpected challenges to return to a place of comfort, familiarity, and family. Hoang Le, C'22, who returned home to Vietnam, is one of them. Once he arrived, he was required to spend two weeks in quarantine. Here is his story.

Life from Quarantine



March 27, 2020: Quarantine

I flew from Nashville to Dallas [on March 20] for my 14-hour flight to Japan since Nashville does not offer international flights. I was very concerned when almost nobody at the airport, including flight attendants and staff, wore masks. I, on the other hand, was very prepared. I had 5 pairs of gloves, 2 masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, mouthwash etc. I was also covered from head to toe. My first flight got delayed so I had no layover time. When I got to the gate [in Dallas], they had already boarded.

The plane was still there but I could not board anymore. So they [sent] me to a hotel and [rebooked me on a] different flight the next day. I was a little terrified but it all worked out. [Vietnam was going to stop accepting flights from Tokyo starting March 22nd. If he could not get a flight from Dallas to Tokyo in time, he may have needed to return to Sewanee. Since he didn't have a visa to stay in Japan, he also could have been forced to stay in the airport in Tokyo for an indefinite period of time.] When I got to Vietnam, as soon as I went through customs, they took our passports and moved us all to a quarantine facility. It is a college dormitory (but nothing [like] Sewanee's dormitory though).

I packed very little for this trip and had no check-in luggage. When I got to the airport in Vietnam, my family was able to send in a phone with a Vietnamese phone number and some clothes. So I lived well in quarantine.

Life in quarantine has been just fine. I was put into a room with four other people who were once strangers but [are] now friends. They include a newlywed couple who, to my surprise, is the same age as me, another woman and her one-year-old grandson. They all came back to Vietnam from Japan. It has been a long time since the last time I slept on a bed with no mattress (so basically like sleeping on the floor). It was fine actually. I slept incredibly well (and incredibly often, too). The balcony must be my favorite place of all. From across the street, I can see people in the opposite apartment building doing chores, from hanging their clothes [out to dry] to watering plants. It is also very hot in Vietnam, as hot as it is in the summer in Sewanee.

We are fed 3 times a day. They actually serve airplane food. My guess is since flights are getting cancelled left and right, the supply of airplane food gets repurposed. So, the food is decent but the portions are tiny. And there are very little vegetables. I could never enjoy a life without vegetables.

Here, I have quite some time for myself. I watch some Netflix, a show named Mad Men. Wow, such a good show. I feel like I get to know America a little better...I am also reading Animal Farm by George Orwell. For a book about animals, I must admit it is intense. A naive me used to think that I need not [...] know about politics. But everything can be political, or it implies something political. The fact that I used to not

care about politics is, in fact, kind of political, too. I also talk to my parents very often. They call me twice a day, asking me if I need anything and telling me how to fight off the Coronavirus. Now, whenever I go back home, I think hard about what are the differences between life here and life in the States. What do people talk about, or not talk about? How do they approach a stranger? What are the misconceptions they have of the other place? Now, since I have a point of reference, I can see things in perspective. It's great.

April 7, 2020: Back Home

Wow, being home is just so nice. My room got invaded so I live in a guest room right now, which is fine. I won't complain as long as I don't have to have a mask on even during sleep. My mom feeds me so well. There's so many things to eat at home. All the goodness. My parents are very relieved, and I am, too.

Vietnam did such an incredible job to keep the outbreak in check. Anyone without a mask will be fined. Anyone returning from any foreign country will be put in quarantine for 14 days. [In quarantine, t]hey check your temperature twice a day and do a throat swab the first day and the day before you get discharged. People need permission for any kind of cross-city transportation. They will check your temperature, too. There are about 240 people who have contracted the virus so far, [and] every single one of them has their name on the news; most of them get quarantined as soon as they return to Vietnam (so they can't go around carrying the virus). They literally tracked down everyone who came into contact with each patient. **SO, NOBODY HAS DIED SO FAR.** I think that's pretty incredible, given that we are neighboring China and [it] is one of the first countries whose people contracted the virus. Crazy, isn't it?

April 22, 2020: Update

As of 22 April 2020, in Vietnam there were 268 confirmed cases, 223 recoveries, and no deaths.



Ezechias Nshimiyimana C'21: Study Abroad and Back Again

On Thursday, March 12, 2020, Ezechias Nshimiyimana, C'21, a University of the South international student from Rwanda who was studying abroad in Buenos Aires, Argentina, “was hanging out with new French friends I just met[, and they] took my friend and [me] back to the hostel they ran. I was playing Table Tennis and was planning on coming back there on Saturday to play more and swim in their swimming pool. The next weekend I would go to the South of Buenos Aires to spend the weekend on the beach. On the morning of the 13th my classmates asked me if I was leaving Argentina [due to the coronavirus,] and I jokingly said that I would go missing and hide somewhere in Argentina if anyone asked me to leave. That afternoon, I got the email [from Sewanee] asking me to leave.”

For many students, study abroad is a life-changing experience. For Ezechias and other students who traveled abroad during spring 2020, when COVID-19 began as a distant shadow then silently crept nearer, ultimately looming large and disrupting life

around the globe, the idea of a life-changing experience takes on new meaning.

For Ezechias, his trip ended the way it began: with unforeseen challenges. While study abroad is usually a straightforward process for most students, requiring a visa which is requested then received, his experience did not take the usual course.

Even going abroad and leaving the country seemed like a huge success because he faced such difficulties getting his visas. Ezechias had chosen IES's Emerging Economies program, which is mainly set in two locations. Students begin in Buenos Aires, Argentina and end in Santiago, Chile, with two international field trips: a one-day trip to Uruguay and a week-long trip to Peru. "As a Rwandan national, I would need four different Visas for this program. I decided I would not go to Uruguay and planned on applying for three different Visas. I was not expecting any of these visa processes to take longer than a month, but it took me more than two months to get the Argentine visa. I witnessed the highest level of bureaucracy [which] I have never seen before. At some point, I started wondering if it had anything to do with my nationality. I had everything required for the normal visa process which normally would take two weeks but the consulate kept asking for more documentation every time I turned in the last thing they had [requested]."

On top of those challenges, Ezechias's program did not begin until February 10, while Sewanee's classes began on January 14, leaving him with a big gap of time. Since he was studying abroad for the semester, he was not allowed to live on campus, but as an international student, going home in the interim was not an option. He was "staying with [his] host family the whole January...I think not everyone is as lucky as me to have such a great host family." He knew he'd be giving up his work study funding, too.

But he did finally go abroad, thanks to the support of the Office of Global Citizenship. He dove into his time in Argentina. He experienced joys, like being "invited to different things such as playing in a small local football [soccer] tournament, birthday parties, etc.," which allowed him to experience regular life in a different country. Being in Argentina involved additional challenges, though, too. "As an international student and a black man, my experience was not exactly the same as the rest of my classmates in the same program. Though it is a big and cosmopolitan city, Buenos

Aires is not very diverse and can be an uneducated society when it comes to racial issues.”

Would it be different or the same in Chile? Ezechias never had the opportunity to find out. “When I left for Argentina, there [were] no case[s of] coronavirus [there]. My host mom and roommates [and I] would discuss the latest news of [the] coronavirus in other parts of the world and most of the time we would crack some jokes about it. We never thought there would be a time when it would be on our doorsteps. When it finally got to Argentina everything changed very quickly. In less than two weeks, the country closed the borders, stopped schools, and issued a quarantine order.

“When I left Argentina had 65 cases. Now [as of April 12] they have about 1700 cases. The quarantine is supposed to end tomorrow [April 13] but it is more likely that it will be extended.”

He, like other study abroad students from around the world, had to return to the United States early, turning a semester abroad into a half-semester abroad. After all the trouble to get out of the States, he had to go to extra trouble to return: he bought a plane ticket, coordinated with the Office of Global Citizenship to get a shuttle from the airport and get a ride back to campus, and self-quarantined for two weeks. Even with all the challenges, he found his five weeks in Argentina to be worth the trouble: “Classes were really interesting, and the experience out of class was equally amazing.”

Returning to the U.S., it was hard to believe that some of the hard work to go abroad had been for naught. Ezechias never traveled to Peru or Chile. Although now he is in “Chile” through his online study abroad classes, the experience will certainly not be the same, as he learns from his dorm room here at Sewanee. While the pandemic clouded his journey, Ezechias still sees some sun. “I am grateful to Sewanee for making it possible for me to have this experience and being with me when the situation got complicated. I also recommend IES Abroad for any international student interested in studying abroad. They were supportive and there every time I needed them and I would choose them again if I had the opportunity.” It was the experience of a lifetime, even if it wasn’t the experience he thought he would have.

Faculty Spotlight:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Tengatenga

In the 1980s, James Tengatenga heard of Sewanee when he was a seminary student in Texas. In addition to the “beauty of the Domain,” he heard of the “academic and religious tradition of the University [and] the synergy between the School of Theology and the College of Arts and Science and the local community.” He would finally arrive here in 2014 from Malawi, having done much in the ensuing years.



Born in Zimbabwe, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Tengatenga went to college in Malawi then attended the Seminary of the Southwest in Texas, where he earned a Master of Divinity and was ordained in 1985. He attended the University of Birmingham (UK) and earned a Ph.D. in theology and religious studies from the University of Malawi.

Over the course of his career, he's been involved in both the church and human rights. He worked as a deacon, a priest, and the chair of the Youth Advisory Committee, among others. From 1998 to 2013, he served as the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Southern Malawi. For seven years, he was the president of the Anglican Family Network. He was a member of the Malawi National AIDS Commission and the National Forum for Peaceful Settlement of Conflict. He has authored or co-authored three books and numerous articles and book chapters. His impact is broad and deep, both in his home country and on matters of the

church.

Here in Sewanee, Tengtenga, as Distinguished Visiting Professor of Global Anglicanism, brings his extensive knowledge and history to the classroom. Of teaching, he said, “I have always wanted to help others learn and to share my long experience in the field as priest, bishop and theological educator. In addition, I wanted to share and represent the global in the institution and so help it in its global citizenship endeavors in educating professional leaders in society and the church.” He continues to do research on “Nineteenth Century Christian Missions and slavery in East Africa and the Indian Ocean.”

Living away from Malawi, there have been some surprises. Between his time in Texas and his time in Sewanee, his biggest jolts of culture shock have come from “Southern accents, eating rare beef steak, sugared bread, and sugared everything!”

Though home is an ocean away, Tengtenga “is in constant touch [with friends and family at home] through correspondence and online news” and “travel[s] to Malawi annually.” Known as “the Warm Heart of Africa because of its people,” Malawi embodies “[d]iverse cultures and multiple languages and dialects in one small country the size of Pennsylvania.” It is “[p]eaceful [and has a] great climate.” Although it is landlocked, the country is home to Lake Malawi, an “amazing...lake (the third largest and [southernmost] of Africa’s Great Lakes),” which takes up nearly a third of the country.

There is much to appreciate here in Sewanee, too, such as “the Community, the Domain and the hikes,” echoing his appreciation of the beauty of nature in Malawi. As to what drew him to Sewanee after all these years, he said, “I am told that one of the meanings of the name Sewanee is ‘something which was lost but found.’ In Malawi we have [a] Chichewa expression for something that is exceptionally beautiful or of extreme worth which is akin to this meaning of Sewanee: Kosowa (translated: something lost, something rare, something not common, something precious and hard to find, unique). I could not resist coming to Kosowa!” Here at Sewanee, we, too, have found something rare in The Rt. Rev. Dr. James Tengtenga.

International Student Spotlight Lucas Martins Carvalho

by Diego Ortega

Why Sewanee?

Growing up in Belford Roxo, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which the United Nations considered one of the world's most dangerous cities in the 1980s, Lucas Carvalho was exposed to great inequality, both economically and socially.

Lucas's community saw many residents living in difficult conditions. The government gave little to no aid to the favelas, and violence was so rampant that police were practically nonexistent. Living in such intense conditions inspired Lucas to instigate change in his community, so he took part in organizations whose goals are to improve inner city conditions. He was the Editor-in-Chief of the Intercultural Newspaper, printed by a local publisher that put out news to inspire young adults in his community to pursue higher education. He also worked with an NGO, Minha Jampa, which promotes democracy and a culture of dialogue by establishing places for safe discussions.

Because of his leadership and activism, AFS, a non-profit that strives to develop students into global citizens by providing scholarships for study abroad, awarded Lucas a scholarship to study abroad in Chicago during his senior year of high school. He was the first in his community to ever receive such an honor. In Chicago, Lucas spent his time studying social inequality and building a close relationship with his host family. When he returned to Brazil and graduated from high school, Lucas went on to study at the Federal University of Paraíba; however, government budget cuts for public education funding forced Lucas to seek other institutions of higher education.

Home Country

Brazil

Year

Sophomore, C'22

Major & Minor

IGS major, Politics minor

Fun Fact

For the 2020-2021 school year, Lucas will be a co-director of a new theme house, the Global Home.

Fortunately, an advisor directed Lucas's interest towards the University of the South, and Sewanee came to his aid, financially and educationally.



Hobbies & Interests

“The many opportunities to develop communication are what catch my heart [at] Sewanee. I speak of communication in a broader sense. Of being able to communicate with people not only through language, but also through music (where I communicate feelings through my acapella group [Cambiata Acapella]), through research (where I communicate my commitment to give back solutions to society as a scientist), through volunteer work (where I communicate human connection), and service activities in the community (where I communicate a sense of belonging). The opportunities on this campus have encouraged me to open myself to experience different ways of communicating and I ended

up realizing language is just one of the many ways we can open ourselves to the world. Sewanee has helped me understand that there are different channels which one can pursue to leave one’s contributions in the world, whatever understanding of the world you may have (it could be your school, your start-up company, your church community, the animal shelter [where] you volunteer, etc.).” One additional way Lucas puts his communication skills into action on campus is as a member of the Organization for Cross-Cultural Understanding (OCCU).

Best Class at Sewanee

Currently, Lucas’s favorite class is the Politics of Development because it lets him study aspects of the life he experienced back in Brazil and brings him “one step closer to promoting better living conditions and social justice in vulnerable communities.”

Advice for Current & Future Sewanee Students

"Don't be afraid to ask questions because Sewanee has a center for everything! Also, try different activities; this is your opportunity to try it all." - Lucas Martins Carvalho