

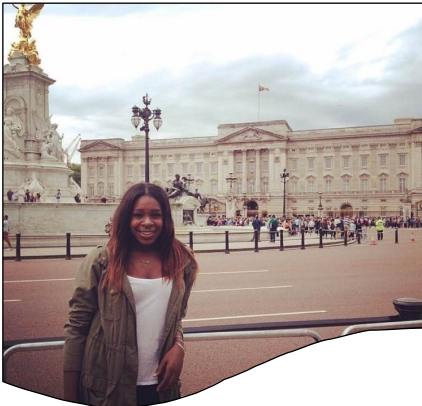
# GW Students Abroad



**GW Student: Chinemelu Okafor**  
**Major: Applied Economics, CCAS MA'18**



**Royal African Society**  
Promoting Africa



*Chinemelu Okafor; Buckingham Palace*

As a dual major in International Studies and Economics during my time at the University of Michigan, I was fascinated by the intersection of economics with international studies. As an undergraduate in the midst of tragedies, such as forced human displacement and acute hunger crises in South Sudan, Somalia, and numerous other countries, I sought a summer experience that would expand my understanding of such complex, technical matters and allow me to specialize in the areas of development, with a heavily research-based focus on the African continent. To this end, I successfully completed a 3 month internship during the summer of 2014 with the Royal African Society (R.A.S).

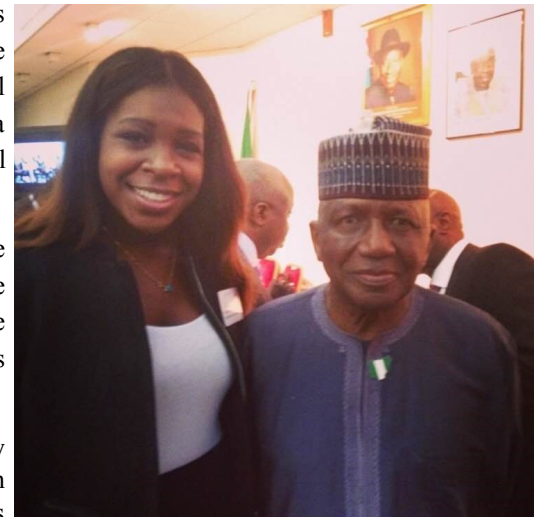
My time with the [Royal African Society](#) proved to be critical to my professional performance as it was my first international internship. With a focus on promoting Africa and strengthening Britain's relationship with Africa, the R.A.S provided me with the opportunity to further my knowledge of African current events within a cosmopolitan environment. As an intern, I was responsible for assisting with coordinating the planning and logistics of meetings and events and supporting the office managers with administrative tasks

which included: researching African innovation stories for the Africa All Party Parliamentary Group (A.P.P.G), drafting press releases, publicizing via Twitter and Facebook, transcribing video submissions, weekly newsletter developments, and website updates.

A second aspect of my work with the R.A.S was providing first-hand support in the preparation of the Africa Writes literature festival and Film Africa festival, where young poets, writers, and directors such as Warsan Shire, Chimamanda Adichie and Abou Bakar Sidibé, respectively, have participated. Furthermore, I was able to actively participate and represent the Royal African Society during professional events including: Prime Ministers Questions, a VIP briefing at the Nigerian High Commission, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Africa Debt Capital Markets Summit at the London Stock Exchange.

However, the liveliest part of working as an intern in London was exploring the city. I ventured into the city of Westminster where I saw Buckingham Palace, rode the London eye, scoured the weekly farmer's market for the ripest produce, rode the double decker buses around town, and shopped along Oxford Street aka le Champs Élysées of London.

On the whole, my time with the Royal African Society served as a catalyst for my love of the international realm. After this experience I undertook internships with the New Democratic Party in Canada and the United Nations in Switzerland, as well as study abroad experiences in Belgium and France. The Royal African Society provided me with an in-depth expansion on International Studies and Development Economics, and allowed me to broaden my intellectual experience and immerse myself in an environment that greatly contrasts that of the United States.



*VIP briefing on Nigeria at the Nigerian High Commission. Pictured left to right: Chinemelu Okafor; Nigerian High Commissioner, his excellency Dr. Dalhatu Sarki Tafida*

**Are you a GW student/alumni with a global job or internship experience to share?**

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