

Winner of the Open Doors Olympiad Tonny Mayambala: “I have Always Strived to Enter Polytechnic University”

Born in Uganda, Tonny MAYAMBALA is half Ukrainian and has been living in Russia for 7 years. And Tonny is also the winner of the international [Open Doors Olympiad](#), and, like many other foreign students, chose to study in the Master's degree program at Polytechnic University. Read about whether it is difficult for him to study at SPbPU, learn the Russian language and master his future speciality in our interview.

- Tonny, nice to see you! Tell us a little about your country, what it is like?

- Uganda is located in the east of Africa. In our country, the famous Lake Victoria, the second largest lake in the world, is in our country. Now the population of Uganda is about 45 million people. I really miss my homeland; unfortunately, because of the coronavirus pandemic, it is virtually impossible to go home.

- Do you like living in Russia?

- I have been living in Russia for nearly 7 years. It's good here, only the weather is rather moody. But the people and the atmosphere are great! I have always wanted to live in Russia, although I had other opportunities. But it was important for me to come here, because my mother is Ukrainian, and I did not know Russian before. Besides, this is my university and my speciality. I always aspired to enter Polytechnic University.



- Tell us how you entered Polytechnic University?

- For a year I studied at SPbPU under the program of preparation for entering university. Then I had a Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, and now I am studying for a Master's degree; I study digital finance, economics and business analytics. In the future I would like to continue my studies in postgraduate school, but perhaps in a different speciality - I like to learn something new.

- How did you find out about the Open Doors Olympiad? Why did you decide to participate?

- I saw a poster about the Olympiad, read more about it on the Internet, and realized that this was a pretty good chance! In my Master's degree, I wanted to do something related to economics, because I work in this area. Therefore, I chose the "Digital Finance, Economics and Business Analytics" program.

- Was it easy to win?

- The exam was difficult - after all, I got my Bachelor's degree in another speciality. Nevertheless, I have vast practice in the field of economics, so I answered most of the questions correctly. And my portfolio also helped me a lot.

- What do you like about the program you are studying? What language

are you lectured in?

- I work as a trader, and some time ago I felt that I lacked theoretical knowledge and foundations. To work successfully, I needed professional training. Therefore, I decided to study digital finance, economics, and business analytics in my Master's degree. Lectures are taught in Russian. I have lived in Russia for almost 7 years and I can speak Russian, so we can change the language of the interview right now!

- Let's try! You are working in the field you are currently studying. But do you want to work in the engineering degree that you got first?

- Yes, I work in the field of economics, but in the future I want to combine both my education: mechanical engineering and business analytics.

- What do you think about the Russian education system?

- I have always believed that Russian education has a clearly applied character. Here you get skills that will be useful to you later in life. They are long-term and more connected with your life, with how to achieve your goals, withstand the blows of fate, and the like. Let's just say it's more like the "old school," the school of life. There is a saying that if you can adapt to life in Russia, then you can live anywhere in the world. For example, if we consider Korea, China or other Asian countries, then they are good for entrepreneurs or capitalists, while Russia is more about life.

The problematic part of the Russian education system, in my opinion, is that it is more difficult for foreigners to get a job here. But at the same time, it's absolutely great here, I have the opportunity to meet many people, learn other cultures and languages.

- Why is it worth participating in the Open Doors Olympiad? Give some advice to those who doubt it.

- First of all, I want to say that the organizers of the Olympiad are great guys, they are ready for cooperation and open to communication. If you have any questions, they will answer you in detail. The Olympiad website is clear and easy to use. And there are many universities to choose from! Therefore, I am sure that Open Doors is a great opportunity for international students who want to study in Russia for free and enjoy the benefits of university variety.

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