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UCT graduates awarded prestigious Gates Cambridge scholarship for 2022

University of Cape Town (UCT) graduates, Sanjiv Ranchod and Kiah Johnson have been awarded the 2022 Gates Cambridge scholarship – considered one of the world’s most prestigious scholarships.

The scholarship focuses on academic excellence and is highly competitive. Applicants need to show leadership capacity and a commitment to improving the lives of others. The Gates Cambridge Class of 2022 is made up of 79 outstanding new scholars. The scholarship programme is the University of Cambridge’s flagship international postgraduate scholarship programme.

In addition to generous funding to do their research, with no age limit on candidates, scholars will benefit from the strong sense of community and identity that has been forged by their predecessors and an absolute commitment to improving the lives of others.

Ranchod who is currently pursuing his masters in the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics at UCT before joining the Gates Cambridge Class for his PhD shared: “I am incredibly excited for the chance to continue my academic journey at the University of Cambridge. As a member of the Gates Cambridge class of 2022, I hope to engage with an international cohort of academically and educationally interested students with diverse backgrounds and am grateful to the Gates Cambridge for this opportunity. I am greatly in debt to UCT, which has provided the necessary support throughout my mathematical studies, with particular mention to my supervisor, Professor George Janelidze.”

Johnson who graduated from UCT in 2015 is excited about joining the 2022 cohort and said: “I am delighted that Gates Cambridge has afforded me the opportunity to study for a PhD at the University of Cambridge. I am dedicated to opening research horizons in rural southern Africa, especially in the Northern Cape province, and look forward to returning to transfer skills gained overseas back into African institutions.”

Scholars come from 30 countries and are studying subjects ranging from food security and bat reservoirs for viral diseases to how gut hormones control food intake and blood glucose levels. The class comprises 41 women and 38 men.

Professor Barry Everitt FRS, Provost of the Gates Cambridge Trust, said: "I am delighted to announce the class of 2022. The last year has been another difficult one for all of us and has shown how many of the challenges we face require a global response which draws on a range of disciplines. The Scholars-elect have been selected to reflect the mission of the Gates Cambridge Trust established through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's generous and historic gift to the University of Cambridge.

"Like their predecessors, this year's cohort are an impressive and diverse group who have already achieved much in terms of their academic studies and leadership abilities and who have shown their commitment to improving the lives of others. We know that they will flourish in the rich, international community at Cambridge and will go on to make a significant impact in their fields and to the wider global community."

The scholarship was established through a US\$210 million donation to the University of Cambridge from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000; this remains the largest single donation to a UK university. Since the first class in 2001, Gates Cambridge has awarded 2 081 scholarships to scholars from 111 countries who represent more than 600 universities globally, and more than 80 academic departments and all 31 Colleges at Cambridge.



Sanjiv Ranchod

Image: Supplied



Kiah Johnson

Image: Supplied

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