

Testimonial

by the Best SFSE 2022 Student

My name is Sulman Olieko Owili, a CMAAE student at the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nairobi, Kenya. I am currently writing my thesis on the effects of the intensity of adoption of agroecological fruit fly management on technical and eco-efficiency among smallholder mango farmers. I am planning to enrol for a PhD position in either Agricultural Economics, Econometrics, or a related field in 2024. In all likelihood, my doctoral research will primarily revolve around the nexus between uncertainty, climate change, and eco-efficiency.

I specialised in Agricultural Policy Analysis at the SFSE, with a specific bias towards mastering Quantitative Methods for Policy Analysis because of my intrinsic passion for Econometrics and Statistics. While the SFSE 2022 was conducted virtually, the experienced instructors drawn from across Africa and beyond made the programme lively. The SFSE offered a unique platform for engaging with varied perspectives and learning from peers and experts in the field.

I extend my profound gratitude to the AERC for their generous support towards my studies and the privilege of being a part of the broad AERC alumni network. Additionally, I am thankful to the University of Pretoria for providing an enabling environment that facilitated the acquisition and refinement of my technical skills. Equally, I express my appreciation to the University of Nairobi for sponsoring my master's studies. A heartfelt acknowledgement goes to the CMAAE Academic Advisory Board for acknowledging me as the Best CMAAE SFSE 2022 Student and bestowing upon me the esteemed CMAAE Academic Advisory Board Prize. This



Mr. Olieko Sulman Owili, the best overall SFSE 2023 student, University of Nairobi, displaying his plaque, the CMAAE Advisory Academic Board Prize

accomplishment has truly humbled me, and I earnestly hope that it will pave the way for new opportunities within academia and the broader professional arena.

To the incoming cohort of SFSE 2023, my advice to you is to dare to dream big

and set audacious goals as you embark on this transformative expedition. But also remember that it is the sweat, the toil, the late-night study sessions, the fortitude to seek help when needed, and the determination to get back up after every fall that will transform those dreams into reality. Life is a tapestry of choices and trade-offs – choose what truly resonates with your passion and dedicate yourself to it. But in doing so, do not forget to uplift a colleague when you can. I can attest that my achievement was, to a great extent, a consequence of the time I spent assisting my peers, whether debugging codes or elucidating seemingly intricate concepts during group discussions or one-on-one interactions.

Never underestimate the potency of curiosity, critical thinking, and originality as you journey further into the realms of academia. Embrace the joy of learning, seek answers to the questions that intrigue you, question assumptions, challenge the status quo, and fearlessly explore new frontiers. In the words of Steve Jobs, *“Here’s to the crazy ones... Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.”*