



Newmarket African Caribbean Canadian Association

NACCA 2021 Scholarship Awards
Rightsline Computer Science Scholarship
What is your perspective on a digital future?

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Lagos the future of Africa- Prevail Awoleye

With a population of over 7 billion, poverty is a pressing issue in the world, and such a big problem needs a big solution. There are limited resources and an ever-increasing number of people. However, with the rapid advancement of technology, I believe that this issue and many more can see a solution within our lifetime.

Africa is a continent fraught with; widespread poverty which results in poor infrastructure, corrupt government, and food insecurity. Contrast this with the city of Lagos, Nigeria, and you will see how much of a difference technology and business has on a city. Focusing on Lagos, Nigeria's tech hub, it is one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa and the world. On the other hand, almost half of Nigeria's population is living in extreme poverty. When comparing Lagos to the rest of Nigeria, statistics show that it is the city with the lowest poverty rate. I am not just listing facts, but I am speaking from my own experience as a Nigerian and Lagosian.

In the 21st century, connection to the internet is a must. Whether it is for school, work, or pleasure, the internet is essential. Some say social media is harmful, but I believe that it can liberate people. Like in Nigeria during the "End SARS" movement to protest police brutality, Lagosians used social media to hold the Nigerian Army accountable when they killed 12 protestors under government orders. Here social media showed its power by documenting the government's brutality and giving people a way to hold them accountable and support their fellow protesters. I believe in social media as the future of activism, and now more than ever, other parts of Nigeria and Africa as a whole need to learn and adapt to a digital future.

Lagos is a tech hub of Africa and a financial giant within the continent, with banking being a vital part of that. In Nigeria, only 49% of the population own bank accounts, while in Lagos, that

number is up to 85%. But modern innovations in technology and finance like Paga have helped to alleviate the issue. With technologies like Paga, whether sending or receiving money, paying bills, or even joining the stock market, it is all possible with just a phone. While most Nigerians lack a bank account, technology like this helps bridge the gap and allows for safer, more reliable transactions. This model of using technology to bridge the void left by traditional banking industries should be replicated throughout Africa.

Africa is the future; with most of the population under 40 years of age, it is primed for a revolution to turn its story from tragedy to success. From food insecurity to unreliable infrastructure and dangerous banking practices, where others see a failing continent, I see opportunities for Africa to shine on the world stage and be the future of the world.