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York U professor helps transform engineering education in Uganda - YFile

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In an effort to enhance undergraduate engineering research in Uganda, faculty members from York University and the University of British Columbia have joined forces on an education-enhancing project with Academics Without Borders (AWB), a non-profit organization aiming to improve the higher education landscape in developing countries.

The Strengthening Engineering Undergraduate Research (SER-Undergraduate) project, initiated by faculty at the Mbarara University of Science & Technology (MUST) in Uganda, aims to provide international support to MUST undergraduate students,

empowering them to engage in high-quality research endeavours. As part of the collaboration, York U Professor **Arash Habibi Lashkari** – an AWB volunteer who is also the founder and director of York University’s [Behaviour-Centric Cybersecurity Center](#) – embarked on a week-long visit to MUST, where he interacted with students and faculty members to assess the current state of the institution’s undergraduate research program and identify areas for improvement.



York University Professor Arash Habibi Lashkari (front, centre) with students from the Mbarara University of Science & Technology in Uganda.

“I am honoured to be part of this initiative to empower undergraduate students in Uganda to pursue research excellence,” says Lashkari. “By sharing our expertise and

resources, we can make a meaningful impact on these students' academic and professional trajectory.”

During his visit to Uganda, Lashkari engaged in insightful discussions with students, faculty members, the international office and the administration department, guiding and enhancing research methodologies and academic standards. The visit not only fostered knowledge exchange but also served as a testament to the importance of volunteerism and international collaboration in advancing education and research on a global scale.

“Membership in the AWB Network offers opportunities for academics and professionals to share their expertise and knowledge as volunteers in capacity-building projects in partnership with institutions in low- and middle-income countries,” says Professor Nancy Gallini, executive director of Academics Without Borders. “Engaging in this work gives faculty and staff a global perspective that enriches education and research on their campuses.”

For MUST students, the SER-Undergraduate project allows for access to resources, mentorship and opportunities for hands-on research experience that they wouldn't have otherwise had. By leveraging the expertise and resources of Canadian faculty members serving as volunteers, Ugandan students can gain the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in their future academic and professional endeavours.

As the SER-Undergraduate project continues to unfold, the goal of transforming engineering education and empowering a new generation of research-driven scholars in Uganda remains.

For more information, visit the [Academics Without Borders](#)

[website.](#)