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INTERNATIONAL SENIOR SEEKS CONTINUED FUNDING

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By Talon Staff

Charlette Tapsoba, a senior majoring in communication studies from Burkina Faso, is seeking help to pay her tuition. She was profiled in The Talon last fall, with the intent to encourage the NU community to consider donating to her YouCaring college tuition fund. As an international student, Tapsoba has been placed in the hard position of being dependent on others' generosity to afford her education. Her student visa restricts her to only working 20 hours a week on campus, which greatly limits how she can support herself.

But last year, Tapsoba raised more than \$7,300 and was able to complete her junior year at Northwest University.

"I would like to thank everyone who supported me and made junior year possible," she said. "I am grateful to all who prayed incessantly for me as I was trying to raise the money for my tuition. A special thanks to professors and friends at NU who helped me every step of the way. I am so blessed by what God put on each of your hearts to do for me."

Tapsoba strengthened relationships with friends and professors and also developed a deeper understanding of her communication studies degree. She served as the vice president of the International Student Club and still writes for The Talon. She excelled academically and made the Dean's List.

This year, however, Tapsoba faces the same financial struggles as before. She lives with the constant fear that each semester may be her last.

"If I'm not able to pay tuition, the International Student Department will notify immigration and they can kick me out," she said. "I would lose my I-20, the document that schools turn into the government to let them know the international student is currently attending," she said.

But if she is able to complete her senior year and graduate with her degree, Tapsoba hopes to someday work for the United Nations, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, or have a position with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), part of the Department of Homeland Security.

"My heart is to work in helping people figure out the country they're entering," Tapsoba said. "Different people have different immigration statuses, and they don't know how to use it."

Tapsoba knows those struggles firsthand, having encountered many challenges when she first entered the U.S., and having no one around to explain how her visa and the American systems worked. She wants to use her personal experience to help others through those same challenges.

"I want to be a voice for other students who are to come, be their guide. [I want to] be a light, helping people navigate through immigration systems," she said.

Tapsoba fears disappointing her family, friends and professors if she doesn't reach her goal and complete her degree.

However, she feels blessed by the opportunities she's been given while at NU and the relationships she's created.

"Even if God takes me away from here, I am blessed by the relationships I've made."

A YouCaring fund has been created with the hope that others would hear her story and offer any support. Her fall tuition is due Sept. 29, 2017.

Here is the link to donate Tapsoba's tuition fund.