

*Nomin Davaanyam, our 2018-2019 A. Margaret Boyd Fellowship recipient has completed her final requirement to ADSOEF by sharing her story in her own vernacular. It is truly amazing.*

My story started when I first came to the USA to be an exchange student in an American high school in Texas 20 years ago. This 16 year-old girl's first trip abroad was to the big nation, which was only seen on TV and movies at that time. I had experienced a new high school environment, witnessed students' open debates with teachers, observed free self-expression among teenagers, and met friendly and supporting staff that were always there to guide and help in any way possible. This was a very different school environment from where I came from, which back then was a place with dominant teachers and dictated study, self-expression discouragement and lack of relationship with school administration and staff. After one year in Texas I went back home a changed person with new perspective and a vision about my life. Since that year I have been working hard to reach today's goal – Master's Degree in Education at Kent State University.

Before coming to the US, I worked on numerous projects in Mongolian high schools and have witnessed that there are many subjects that needed further development. Even though today's schools have improved since I was there as a student, there is still a big gap between student and the support they receive from school. Students need help and guidance to explore their interests, consult on which profession to pursue and which university to apply, but most importantly they need psychological help and guidance to motivate their studies, master the skills, identify problems and take action, learn positive behaviors, and promote confidence and success. Eye-witnessing the need of school psychologists, I have decided to study Educational Psychology and it took me countless hours of studying for tests, document preparation, interviews, acceptance and rejection letters, and most importantly search for funding. Having an evidence of funding has helped me to pass the last two stages - visa interview and crossing the US border. There are thousands who apply for study visa in the US Consulate in Ulaanbaatar, but only less than one hundred people get the opportunity to go.

Within two years at Kent State University, I have learned a great deal and has grown as a person. This journey has been challenging, but it was completed only with the help and support from generous organizations, and especially DKG and its sisters – women educators. As this journey comes to an end, it opens a new door towards an even more challenging journey, and I am taking all the support and love DKG sisters have shown me and with it I am ready to open the new door.

DKG will always be in my heart.

Forever thankful,

Nomin