

Thunderbird at ASU grad seeks to redefine global systems for emerging economies

Jackline Nampeera will graduate this spring with a Master of Global Management

By Mary Hess, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [spring 2026 graduates](#).

For Jackline Nampeera, the path to [Thunderbird School of Global Management](#) at Arizona State University initially began with a thoughtful question.

How do global systems actually work, and who gets left out of them?

Growing up in Kabale District, Uganda, Nampeera already had developed deep international exposure through her work and travel, but she wanted more.

"I hoped to understand how global systems actually work, how capital flows, how markets connect and how to position emerging economies like Uganda within those systems. Thunderbird gave me that lens," she said.

While pursuing her [Master of Global Management](#) at Thunderbird, Nampeera found both the framework and the challenge she was looking for. A recipient of the prestigious [SHARE Fellowship](#), she describes her experience as transformative but intentionally demanding.

"There were moments I had to perform before I felt ready," she said. "But that's where the growth happened. Thunderbird doesn't give you confidence. Rather, you build it by doing the work."

Beyond the classroom, Nampeera found meaning in her work with students at Thunderbird's [Career Management Center](#), where she supported peers as they navigated uncertainty and career decisions.

“I’ve seen people walk in unsure and leave with confidence,” she said. “It reminded me that impact isn’t always loud. Sometimes it’s helping one person move forward in a way that changes everything for them.”

As she prepares to graduate, Nampeera is focused on building a venture that addresses key access gaps in East Africa — particularly in markets and essential services to support sustainable business development.

“The issue is beyond production. It is more about access and positioning,” she said. “Farmers are producing value but not capturing it. I would build systems that connect them directly to markets, improve quality standards, and give them leverage in the value chain. That’s how you create sustainable economic growth.”

Question: What’s something you learned while at Thunderbird that changed your perspective?

Answer: Execution alone doesn’t drive outcomes, but influence does. I came in very analytical. If something made logic or sense on paper, I expected it to move forward. But I’ve learned that ideas don’t win because they’re right, they win because someone can move people behind them.

That shifted how I operate. Now I focus just as much on how I communicate and position ideas as I do on the ideas themselves.

Q: What advice would you give to a student just starting at Thunderbird?

A: Don’t wait until you feel ready — because you won’t. Step in early, speak up and take on challenges that stretch you.

Q: What motivates or inspires you?

A: What motivates me is accountability. I know the opportunities I’ve had are not common, and that drives me to build things that matter for the communities I come from.

Q: For what in your life do you feel most grateful?

A: I’m grateful for the perspective I’ve gained. Moving between Uganda and global institutions like Thunderbird has expanded how I see what’s possible, and I carry that into everything I do.

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Jackline Nampeera (front row, second from right) and fellow classmates at the most recent new student orientation at Thunderbird Global Headquarters. Each leader is responsible for onboarding and welcoming new T-birds and leading activities, conversations and helping the new class get acquainted with the journey to come. Courtesy photo

Text image(s)



Jackline Nampeera, courtesy photo

Gallery



Jacklin Nampeera (right) at the annual Ambassador's Ball, hosted by the Diplomatic Corps of Arizona.



Nampeera and her Global Challenge Lab team.



The Global Challenge Lab team members enjoy the beautiful sites of San Francisco during a project break.



Nampeera and friends make memories at Spooky Pub Night, one of the many themed nights at the Pub at Thunderbird.



Club night at the Pub at Thunderbird.



Panel for Master Class Monday at Thunderbird.



Thunderbird's New Impact Club leaders with Director General and Dean Charla Griffy-Brown (second from right) after reimagining Thunderbird's Wellness Room.