

KORVAH Tarnue Kootee (APS, Liberia) has faced much hardship in his life, having spent most of his life as a refugee fleeing ongoing bouts of conflict and violence in his birth country of Liberia and other countries of asylum. However, with a strong sense of determination and will to survive, Kootee has grasped at every opportunity to better his situation and gain a solid education.

With 2 years of vocational training in information technology under his belt and a keen interest in journalism, Kootee has worked as a teacher and for various UN-related agencies assisting with relief and repatriation activities. He speaks several African dialects as well as French and English. In fact, it is thanks to his interest in world news and language skills that that he was able to survive. Upon hearing a BBC radio report that his village was being attacked by guerillas he fled to a refuge camp in Guinea with his family and helped share radio reports with other Liberians who could not speak English.

With a strong passion to pursue tertiary studies to improve the plight of his people, Kootee investigated opportunities abroad and discovered APU through a link on the United Nations University website. However, Kootee's dreams were initially squashed as he couldn't muster the US\$50 Application Fee. But with a full-scholarship from APU, some UN assistance in Africa and help from his brother who has settled in Australia, he has been able to make the long journey to APU in Beppu, Japan.

Kootee states, "In order to achieve freedom and peace I believe it is important to become familiar with the cultures and languages of others, and I feel that APU with students from over 75 countries and regions and with its strong ethos towards attaining a better world, I will become empowered with the skills and knowledge to tackle some of the toughest challenges facing my country."