

From Toronto to Nairobi to Niagara Falls, Oh My!

Published 6/17/2019 by [Ashley Ribbel](#)

by **Maria Sairoglou and Mary Bantug, Seneca International**

in the **June 2019 issue**

One round-trip flight from Toronto, Ontario to Nairobi, Kenya is approximately 24,000 km. Now multiply that by seven – that is the number of times our Seneca team of faculty and international staff took that round-trip flight between Toronto and Nairobi over the last two years. That amounts to just under 170,000 km!

Now, why would we do such a thing?

Seneca was selected (along with College of the Rockies and Memorial University's Marine Institute as a consortium) to lead a project to create and develop three short courses on leadership and management for the Kenya Technical Trainers College in Nairobi. This project is part of a five-year, 20 million-dollar initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada and administered by Colleges and Institutes Canada in partnership with the Ministry of Education in Kenya. The Kenya Education for Employment Program (KEFEP) is focused on strengthening and supporting technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Kenya. For more information on KEFEP, visit the [Colleges and Institutes Canada website](#).

Since 2017, we have facilitated focus groups, workshops, and train-the-trainer sessions in order to ensure that the short courses are not only completed, but also useful and sustainable for our Kenyan partners to use in the coming years.

It has truly been an eye-opening experience, for both our Kenyan partners (Kenya Technical Trainers College (KTTC) and the Kenya Association of Technical Training Institutes (KATTI)) and for Seneca and our Canadian partners. This program has given us the opportunity to send two of our own faculty members overseas (Professors Kevin Pitts and Azhar Laher) to the sunny savannahs of Kenya to build their experience by teaching within a different context to an audience belonging to a different culture. This has solidified our commitment to becoming a more global institution and has allowed us to build on our previous experience working in East Africa (Tanzania and Mozambique). In addition to Kevin and Azhar, other Senecans that visited Kenya and have contributed to the project are Jos Nolle, Mary Bantug,

and Maria Sairoglou.



Kevin Pitts (the Teaching & Learning Centre), Azhar Laher (School of Leadership and Human Resources), Beth Martin (College of the Rockies, British Columbia), Mary Bantug (Seneca International), and Madame Emily Maina (Deputy Director, Ministry of Education, Kenya)

We recently hosted our Kenyan colleagues from KTTC and KATTI here in our beautiful country to attend the CIGan conference in Niagara Falls and also to visit our campuses in Toronto and in Markham. We are grateful to have support from the greater Seneca community, including Odeyto, Work-Integrated Learning, the Teaching & Learning Centre, Leadership and Employee Development, Sustainability, and International. Our Kenyan colleagues have truly enjoyed their time with us and are looking forward to being able to continue building on the partnership and friendship that has grown over the last two years.



Laurel Schollen, Robert Okinda (Head of Department from KTTC), and Maria Sairoglou (Seneca International)



Our Kenyan delegation with Peggy Pitawanakwat (First Peoples@seneca) & Paula Echeveste Petrone (Sustainability)

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