

# Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project Highlights

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Scholar Program 35

## EXCELLENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Coming from Nigeria, it was fascinating to see the workings of a well-organized transportation system operated through a partnership between Michigan State University (MSU) and Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA). The bus routes (the 30 series) within campus are free!!! Yes, you read it right. Buses on MSU Campus are FREE, GRATIS and FOR NOTHING! MSU is funding CATA to provide free bus services on Campus for Students, Staff and Faculty (<https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2018/free-on-campus-bus-service-for-students-starts-fall-semester/>). Apparently, this innovation was introduced to 'reduce the out-of-pocket costs to students and parents and be an incentive for more students to use CATA while on campus to get to class and back safely!' With such incentives, students clearly have no business with failing! In addition to providing free comfortable bus services, the drivers are perfect gentlemen and ladies. Always willing to assist and clearly not tired of the persistent questions from people like me who are experiencing a new world 'order'!

In my first week of arriving on campus, while trying to understand the route to campus, it was usual to have the drivers go the extra mile to take my NAPP Colleagues and me to buses whose routes were best suited for our destination. I was in a bus one day when I heard a student saying they had to protest to change the route of bus 38 because they were not satisfied. **For crying out loud!** Bus 38 offers free rides and yet students get to protest because they were not satisfied with its route. This shows the premium and value placed on education in the west. All I need to do every day is to check the schedule of buses I will be needing (to know their time of arrival and departure) and I will be good to go for the day. Pamphlets are available for students to understand the snow route detour during periods of heavy snow. For routes outside campus where a token has to be paid, students of Michigan

State University are given student's discount on each ride. I was also amazed to know that you can transfer your ride from a bus to another. These transfers may be made at boarding centers or bus stops along the route. CATA fixed-route transfers are free, all you need to do is to ask the driver for a transfer ticket when you board the first bus. It is also worth noting that all CATA buses are equipped with wheelchair ramps or lifts. They also have an online service application on play store for android phones which can be downloaded for ride alerts on the go. This experience is one that will not be forgotten in a hurry.



Napp scholar Hephzibah Onyeje Obekpa at a bus stop

By: Hephzibah Onyeje Obekpa

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