



Thanks to the bursary, I was able to spend a week in Paris, France. While there, I attended summer school each morning; where we discussed decolonisation, political legacies and the works of kings.

**La Sorbonne University**, located in the heart of Paris, is a hub of intellectual enrichment and cultural significance, boasting Nobel prize winners for alumni. Steeped in history and renowned for its academic excellence, this prestigious institution has attracted scholars from around the world for centuries. Visiting La Sorbonne allowed me to walk the same corridors and admire the same frescoes as some of my favourite writers and philosophers.

The highlight of summer school had to be our lecture on Charles de Gaulle. The titan who fought to raise France's morale during the second world war. Studying the life and legacy of Charles de Gaulle was a fascinating journey into the realms of conflict and compromise. As the towering figure of 20th-century France, de Gaulle's impact on the nation cannot be overstated. Studying his writings, speeches, and actions unveiled an enigmatic character who gracefully navigated the turbulent times of war and reconstruction. Understanding de Gaulle's unwavering belief in national sovereignty, and his pivotal role in shaping post-war Europe provided valuable insights into the challenges and triumphs of leadership in times of crisis.

Another wonderful experience was getting to see *Présence Africaine* in person. This bookshop has welcomed some of the greatest creatives and writers of the past century, such as Ryan Coogler, Maryse Condé and Wole Soyinka. As the first visitor when they opened that day, I had the chance to speak to the staff about how inspiring I found the work of that organization, that has championed activists of Afro-Caribbean descent for decades. The reception was very welcoming, and I even bought some translated editions of Patricia Hill Collins' work.

The freedom the bursary gave me to navigate a new city, independently, was wonderful. With no set itinerary or constraints, I got to traverse the city at my own pace, whether by tram, metro, or foot. Wandering through gorgeous, unfamiliar streets, I stumbled upon hidden gems and unexpected surprises. Notably, the work of a flacking artist called Emenem, who fixes broken pavements with colourful tiles. Engaging with locals became more accessible when on my own and I made several friends, not only from summer school but also in random parks; where I'd connect with strangers over our shared love of birds. Whether it was visiting historical sites, trying Haitian and Senegalese cuisine, or wandering through bustling markets, every step was filled with a sense of adventure and discovery. Without the bursary, this joyful trip would not have been possible, and I am grateful for all of the memories I was able to make in France.

Kind Regards Triumph .