

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Peter Embalabala

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Immigrant Stories Oral History project

Interview #IM-A-L-2020-040

Peter Embalabala, an immigrant from Kenya, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Immigrant Stories* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

July 30, 2020: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

August 5, 2020: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Kaytlin Jacoby

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 2:03 + 2:23 / 2.05 + 2.38 = 4.43 hrs

Session 1: Growing up in Vihiga, Kenya, educational experiences immigration to U.S.

Session 2: College in the United States, building a career, marriage and family.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on April 13, 2021.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Peter Embalabala, Immigrant Stories, IM-A-L-2020-040

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Peter Embalabala was born in Vihiga, Kenya on February 14, 1959. He grew up in Kenya and finished high school in 1978. He then immigrated to the United States to attend college at Spring Arbor College in Spring Arbor, Michigan, where he majored in biology and mathematics. Upon graduating from Spring Arbor College, Embalabala earned his Master's in mathematics at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. He married Julie Van Sledright in 1986. Embalabala received his first teaching position at 1988. After working in this position for two years, he and his wife, Julie, relocated to Kenya, where Peter tried to find work. Upon finding no work in his field, they returned to the United States six months later and Peter got his old job back. When faced with his position being cut, Peter was offered a position at Lincoln Land Community College, a position he's held since 1991.

Embalabala and Julie raised seven children, homeschooling each of them. Peter has taken many of his children to visit where he grew up in Africa. He also sponsors students in Kenya to attend the Vihiga Boy's High School, the boarding school in Kenya Embalabala attended as a child. In addition to sponsoring students' education by providing funding for books and uniforms required for school, Embalabala also has donated to orphanages in Kenya to help disadvantaged children have a better chance of success. Embalabala plans to continue his support for children in his home country. After years of living in the United States on temporary visas, Embalabala is looking towards beginning the process of becoming a permanent United States citizen.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Immigration; Kenya; education in Africa; life in the U.S. as an immigrant; life as a foreign student in America; interracial marriage; home schooling

Notes to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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