MEET GHANA'S TOP 30 U30
A Global Group Of Young Leaders Practising Excellence In Their Fields

Abraham Attah 14 year old Award winning Actor and student about to take Hollywood by storm!

INCLUDES FORTHRIGHT ARTICLES ON GHANA'S DEVELOPMENT

Exclusive Interviews with Social Entrepreneur Elijah Amoo Addo, Culinary entrepreneur Essie Bartels and Fashion Whizkid Papa Oppong, plus profiles of the top 30 U30
A Message from the Editor

Ben Anim-Antwi, Editor-in-Chief & Director of Communications
“What good is knowledge if it’s not shared?”

A simple statement really... what’s the point in having knowledge if you don’t share it? Collaboration and generosity are what drive innovation and engagement and yet people and organisations are often obsessed with hiding things away. My lecturer at University once told me that, “institutions devise courses on ‘data protection’ and ‘data security’ in multiples, but never do so on ‘generosity’ and ‘collaboration’”.

If we are to see a self sustaining Ghana we must share knowledge, experience and best practice for benefit of this and future generations. Moreover if we are to mobilise as a collective we cannot do so effectively without collaboration.

2015 was a successful first year for the Future of Ghana initiative. With the release of our maiden publication and delivery of the Future of Ghana Leadership Forum last summer our core objectives were met amongst additional milestones. On meeting these core objectives it’s become apparent just how important the sharing of knowledge is; the publication is essentially an information resource, which can be archived and referenced for years to come. Whilst the leadership forum allows for some of the best young talent in Ghana to be connected with forward thinking experienced thought leaders/companies globally who share that experience and knowledge.

You will be able to read about the fruits of the forum in this publication, as we document a story from one of the attendees who highlights their thoughts and the impact attending the forum had on him.

As an initiative we have expanded our reach. We now have Youth Chapter heads mobilising the Ghanaian youth located in Toronto, Paris, Hamburg and Accra; focused on realising the Future Ghana’s mission in their respective countries. It is significant to note that half of these appointments came from collaborations and existing relationships.

This growing network will be integrated within our Me Firi Ghana Members network which we soft launched earlier this year. The MFG Members network is a digital platform enabling Ghanaian youth to Learn, Connect, Collaborate and Grow with like-minded entrepreneurs and professionals within the global Ghanaian community, because again ‘what good is knowledge if it’s not shared?’

Thus as we release the second edition of the Future of Ghana Publication, you will see it is prominent in quite a few of the top 30 U30 pioneer profiles that there is a desire for them to share their knowledge and experience in an effort to contribute to the development Ghana. This ties in nicely with our theme for the year which is; Governance: Changing the levers of accountability - The role of Ghanaian Youth. It is an important year for Ghana with the elections in December but beyond just voting (if eligible) what is the role of young Ghanaians? With a global population of young Ghanaians blessed with skills and talents, should the accountability with governing the country just sit with those in power?

By this time next year we would have already celebrated 60 years of independence from Britain, no doubt there will massive celebrations worldwide due to reaching this landmark. By then it would be nice to also celebrate the emergence of a global Ghanaian community committed to shaping and influencing the destiny of Ghana...

We believe we are on our way to achieving this and invite you to join us in helping to positively promote Ghana and the next generation of future leaders. Let’s share this publication within our communities, work places, to other young people so that they and the world can see the positive, inspirational yet amazing contributions young Ghanaian’s are contributing to the world.

Publisher: Me Firi Ghana Ltd
Editor: Ben Anim-Antwi
Deputy Editor: Jermaine Bamfo
Programme Manager: Sandra Osei
Researcher: Lois Mensah-Afoakwah
Creative Director: Samuel Mensah-Bonsu
Contact: Bantwi@mefirighana.com
About Me Firi Ghana

Vision:
A first world self-sustaining Ghana

Mission:
Connect the world with Ghana

About Us:
We consult individuals, organisations and government recommending opportunities and tailored strategies to engage Ghana and the Diaspora communities. We provide accessible routes to quality and trusted professional support, working closely with established partners within our network.

Who we’ve worked with:

www.mefirighana.com
Info@mefirighana.com
About the Wam Campaign

About the charity:
WAM is a UK registered charity established to advance the education and training of children and young people living in marginalized communities in Ghana.

Charity vision
A world where young people are placed at the centre of development, using and developing knowledge and skills to transform their lives and that of their communities.

Charity mission:
We consult individuals, organisations and government recommending opportunities and tailored strategies to engage Ghana and the Diaspora communities. We provide accessible routes to quality and trusted professional support, working closely with established partners within our network.
Meet the minds behind

The Future of Ghana

The driving forces behind the Future of Ghana initiative are young, intelligent, British-Ghanaians who are passionate about engaging and inspiring young Ghanaians to use their creativity, skills and talents for the development of Ghana.
Arnold Sarfo-Kantanka  
(Chair)  

Is a social entrepreneur and advocate for youth participation with development within Africa. He is Chair of the Future of Ghana project and founder of multiple award winning company Me FiRi Ghana & sister charity WAM Campaign.  

The impact of the company & charity’s work has permitted Arnold to represent Ghana during the 2013 World Economic Forum, speak on platforms such as TEDx SOAS and interview Virgin Group’s Founder Sir Richard Branson on entrepreneurship, for MTV Base Africa. He was recognized as INDIAFIRCA’s Young Visionary Award Winner for Ghana and was invited to Buckingham Palace to meet HRH The Queen of England and Prince Charles for his contributions to the Ghanaian community.

Ben Anim-Antwi  
(Editor-in-Chief & Director of Communications)  

Is a creative thinker, someone who strongly believes in the empowerment of young people and the development of Africa through Diaspora engagement.  

Since leaving university in 2006 where he graduated in BA (Hons) Law & Politics he has embarked on a career in central government within the UK specialising in foreign affairs and local government specialising in service improvement.  

Ben is also a freelance journalist and the Editor/Director of Communications for Me Firi Ghana. His aspirations for the future are to publish an as yet untitled book and ensure the Future of Ghana initiative has the kind of impact that is felt for decades to come.
Sandra Osei
(Project Manager)

Is a strategist and qualified PRINCE 2 Project Manager with a track record working in high profile organisations and programmes. Her current role at the Mayor’s Fund for London as a Portfolio Performance Manager means she is responsible for managing performance and contractual agreements across various delivery partnerships. Prior to this, Sandra worked as part of the Security and Resilience planning team at the London 2012 Olympics Committee, contributing to the deployment of 23,000 security personnel.

Born and raised in East London, Sandra has been proactive in seeking international pursuits. She volunteered in remote villages across India where she taught in community schools and advocated development policies around Health care and Education. Sandra enjoys project consulting and has a passion for Africa’s advancement. She considers it a ‘responsibility’ to give back what she was given – an opportunity to progress.

Samuel Mensah - Bonsu
(Creative Director)

Has created and been credited in crafting Award-Winning Campaigns and artistic treatments globally for clients such as: BFI, Renault, MTV, Virgin & Nike. His Personal work has also been featured on prestigious platforms and magazines such as Creative Review, Adobe.com, Abduzeedo, & DesignYouTrust to name a few.

Samuel is currently a Designer at AKQA London on the Nike Global Team. Having Worked on Global Football campaigns during the 2014 World Cup as well as Nike NTC and Nike Running Campaigns.

Samuel holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Graphic & Media Design for Advertising from University of Arts London.

An active member of the Art directors Club and maintains a Practice maintaining Self-Initiated works under the personal outfit SMBStudios, committed to exploring new ways of creating innovation and visual storytelling for various industries.
Tracy Aryee-Quao
(Intern/Administrator)

Is a second year Politics and International relations student at the University of Westminster. Tracy has a fiery passion for international relations, which she hopes will propel her into the field of development and business in her home country, Ghana. Moving from Ghana at a young age, Tracy felt out of touch with her homeland and decided to commit her future to trying to contribute to the rise of a potentially strong nation in Africa by co-founding The We Rise Initiative and by joining the Future of Ghana team.

She believes that Africa is a huge force globally but without the right vision, direction and opportunities stemming from its youth population, the risk of a vicious cycle continues. Tracy believes the Future of Ghana Initiative will help Ghana achieve its first world sustainable nation status and believes it will help stimulate youth empowerment and increased participation in Ghana’s future. Tracy’s goals are simple encompass all things affecting Ghana, whether that be women’s education, sexual health, career and empowerment, whilst also working on becoming a better individual and woman.

Andrea Amaning-Okyere
(Intern/Administrator)

Is a 17 year old student from London. She was chosen to intern on the Future of Ghana project because of her unique insight, knowledge and aspirations for Ghana’s development. In her own words “Ghana has so much potential that has been shown throughout many years and it only takes one generation to make this flourish, this generation”.

Andrea believes Ghana is headed in the right direction and feels that sooner rather than later young and older people alike will have a suitable place to live and a stable job, leading Ghana to be a first world country with a good economic system. She is confident in the years to come the Future of Ghana initiative can be the catalyst for this.
Dr Jermaine Bamfo  
(Deputy Editor)

Is a qualified medical doctor. He holds a first class Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Liverpool, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychiatry & Mental Health from Queen’s University Belfast, as well as twin degrees of Bachelor of Medicine / Bachelor of Surgery from Imperial College London. He has successfully completed two years of medical foundation training in Northern Ireland. A freelance artist designer & photographer, Jermaine is involved in the creation & daily running of multiple social media outlets, while his artwork has been recognised by celebrities such as Meagan Good & Tinie Tempah.

A fierce proponent for the forward progression of Ghana and the burgeoning responsibility for today’s Ghanaian youth, he is passionate about improving communities in the UK and Ghana, and spotlighting young Ghanaians making an impact in these communities. Jermaine is a regular and long-time contributor to the Me Firi Ghana Blog and is also the PR & Communications Officer for the GUBA Foundation, taking a prominent role in the ‘Closing The Gap’ project aiming to reduce infant mortality in Ghana and the UK.

Sha Osei  
(Chair of Regional Managers & RM for France)

Known by the nickname Sha, Akosua Osei is a writer, Publisher, public relations and events owner residing in Paris, France. Raised in the UK, in a West Indian household, but dreaming of returning to Africa (she is Ghanaian on her Father’s side)

Sha has enjoyed studying and travelling internationally, which has given her the thirst and drive to live and work abroad. Working within the Fashion Industry for over five years, she has developed great rapports with industry insiders and clients who have enabled her to live her dreams of running her own magazine and creative agency.

Sha plans to visit Ghana for the very first time in association with the Future of Ghana initiative.
Lucy Larbi
(Regional Manager for Germany)

was born in Kumasi, Ghana and is a well travelled young lady. She was raised in Germany where she resided until she completed her A-levels. From there she moved to Paris to learn French and to understand the culture. Later she would leave for the Netherlands, as she wanted to discover the world of politics and diplomacy, thus completed a three year Bachelor at the University of Groningen.

Whilst in Madrid, Spain to study Spanish, Lucy found herself being accepted on a Masters course in Public Policy and Human Development at the United Nations University in Maastricht. She is also actively involved in establishing a community of learning for African PhD students, in the form of an e-learning platform that caters to the needs of students while completing their studies.

Lucy is currently doing an internship in Addis Ababa at the German Development Cooperation which is initiative of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. There she is working on the development of Pan African University. Which is one of the flagship projects of the African Union and is a network university in 5 geographical locations on the continent aiming to exemplify excellence in African higher education.

Evelyne Afaawua
(Regional Manager for Italy)

Based in Northern Italy Evelyne is a TEDxMilanoWoman speaker, occasional radio personality and the founder of Afro-Italian Nappy Girls (Nappytalia), a platform with over 5000 followers and members which acts as an online community at brings together African-Italian girls, who have decided to abandon chemical straightening to show off their natural curly Afro proudly. Raised in Italy Evelyne is proud to call herself a “Black-Italian” but is equally proud and passionate about Ghana and is active in expressing her roots and culture through Nappytalia.
Tom-Chris Emewulu  
(Regional Manager for Ghana)

is a dynamic change maker with a distinctive track record of pioneering projects that have impacted hundreds of youth. While a student of Radford University College where he pursued a B.Sc. in Business Administration majoring in accounting, Tom-Chris founded Stars From All Nations (SFAN) in 2013 as a tool for bridging the gap between college and career, and to help raise the next generation of African leaders.

His accomplishments in youth development have been rewarded recently with a placement in the second Cohort of President Obama’s Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI) West Africa in November 2015. Tom-Chris is a published author of an inspirational book entitled “Breaking the Limits”. He enjoys focusing on topics pertaining to youth education and youth entrepreneurship.
Gabriel Odartei
(Regional Manager for Canada)

is a social entrepreneur and the founder of the award winning multimedia enterprise called Ghanalinx Media Group, based in Toronto Canada. Ghanalinx Media Group (GMG) is a multi-faceted media enterprise that focuses primarily on Ghanaians (and other African ethnicities) living abroad. Its mission is to bridge the cultural gap between Ghanaians and the global community, an initiative that has been the sole mission for its founder Gabe. He has a wide range of experiences and has been an active member in the Ghanaian Canadian community for many years. His company organize many special events in the community, such as African movie premieres, Ghana Independence Culture expo and concerts.

He has also collaborated with many event organizers in the community to put together various events and programs. Gabriel is also very passionate about public service; He has established his own Ghanalinx Foundation, which is a non profit organization with a mission to collaborate with other organizations to promote Diaspora initiatives and to also provide social assistance to disadvantaged youths in the Ghanaian community. He also volunteers with the Ghanaian Canadian Association of Ontario as a media relations officer and youth outreach rep. He has been part of the executive and planning committee for many Diaspora initiatives such as Youth Leadership summits, Ghana Flood Relief Program and many others.

Gabe’s work and efforts in the African community has not gone unnoticed, he was awarded in 2011 for Best African Entertainment website at the African Entertainment Awards. He has also being honoured as a Role Model at the annual Black Canadian Awards and has also been awarded as a Canadian Achiever at the 15th annual Ghanaian Canadian Achievement Awards.
With a career that spans six decades, it is a travesty that for most of his career his work was not widely known. In his street and studio photography he represents societies in transition: Ghana moving toward Independence, and London becoming a multicultural metropolis. Moreover the legendary James Barnor is credited with introducing colour processing to Ghana!

His photographs have been collated by the London-based charity Autograph ABP during a four-year project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in 2011 became part of the new Archive and the Research Centre for Culturally Diverse Photography.

In 2011, Mr Barnor was honoured with a GUBA (Ghana UK-Based Achievement) special “Lifetime Achievement” award. On receiving it, he revealed that it was the first award he had ever been given.

Barnor had work included in the show Another London: International Photographers Capture London Life 1930–1980 at Tate Britain in August 2012, with his 1967 photograph of BBC World Service reporter “Mike Eghan at Piccadilly Circus, London” featuring on the cover of the catalogue.

His photographs are represented in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Tate and Government Art Collection in the UK, as well as in numerous international private collections.

A true pioneer and living legend, Mr Barnor’s knowledge of Ghana’s past and his enthusiasm for its future makes him an exemplary patron.
Meet the Judges

The task of deciding on the final 30 pioneers for the publication fell to five individuals who are pioneers in their own right and represent Ghana with distinction in their various careers. It was only right that the pioneers of the present decide on those under 30’s who are making an impact now and/or will be in the future...
Ethel Cofie

Is CEO and Founder of EDEL Technology Consulting (An IT Consulting and Digital Products Company) and also a Mandela Fellow for President Obama’s Young African Leaders initiative (YALI).

A high calibre IT Professional with a wealth of technical and commercial skills acquired across a wide range of demanding roles and over 12 years’ experience working in the UK, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone on projects for organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Mobile Technology for Health project, the Ford Foundation’s Election Monitoring project for Nigeria and as Head of Commercial Solutions for Vodafone; conceptualizing, executing and working with teams to align Corporate strategy to IT strategy and to develop and manage creative technology solutions.

She has been featured in BBC and CNN for work in technology and women leadership. Ethel is also the Founder of Women in Tech Africa, initiator of the 1st Pan African woman in tech meet up and was shortlisted for the United Nations GEM – Tech Award for work supporting women in ICT. Women in Tech Africa brings together women in over 30 countries across Africa and will be opening offices in Zambia, Nigeria, Canada, DRC and Benin in the coming months. Ethel also sits on numerous boards of numerous companies in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa.

Isaac Babu-Boateng

Was named by Forbes Magazine as one of Africa’s Best Young Entrepreneurs under the Age of 30, he is one of the leading voices of the pan-African millennial generation. With an ambition matched only by a grandeur vision, Babu-Boateng is at the forefront of the mission for this generation of Africans to control the image of Africa and the rest of the world’s perception of the continent.

Mr. Babu-Boateng is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of ambitious and fast growing digital media company Face2face Africa, which he founded in 2011 with no more than his own pocket savings and a strong passion for telling the African story.

Today, Face2face Africa is a multi-niche media company that has created several platforms to engage the pan-African community. Mr. Babu-Boateng believes that Africa is his and every Africans calling, and deems it prudent and necessary to contribute towards a better future for the next generation. In 2015, his alma mater named him as part of 40 Under 40 brightest and most successful young alumni.

Ethel Cofie

Is CEO and Founder of EDEL Technology Consulting (An IT Consulting and Digital Products Company) and also a Mandela Fellow for President Obama’s Young African Leaders initiative (YALI).

A high calibre IT Professional with a wealth of technical and commercial skills acquired across a wide range of demanding roles and over 12 years’ experience working in the UK, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone on projects for organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Mobile Technology for Health project, the Ford Foundation’s Election Monitoring project for Nigeria and as Head of Commercial Solutions for Vodafone; conceptualizing, executing and working with teams to align Corporate strategy to IT strategy and to develop and manage creative technology solutions.

She has been featured in BBC and CNN for work in technology and women leadership. Ethel is also the Founder of Women in Tech Africa, initiator of the 1st Pan African woman in tech meet up and was shortlisted for the United Nations GEM – Tech Award for work supporting women in ICT. Women in Tech Africa brings together women in over 30 countries across Africa and will be opening offices in Zambia, Nigeria, Canada, DRC and Benin in the coming months. Ethel also sits on numerous boards of numerous companies in Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa.
Adrien Victor Sauvage

Is a British designer, director and photographer of Ghanaian descent. Establishing himself as a stylist and lifestyle consultant, Sauvage drew clients from society and celebrity circles and the worlds of rock, fashion, film, sports and politics. While working with these clients, Sauvage moved from styling to designing when he realised that men’s sartorial needs weren’t being met.

Established in early 2010, British fashion house A.Sauvage has acquired a reputation for its understated luxury and no-nonsense approach to contemporary tailoring, applying the principles of Adrien Sauvages founding philosophy, ‘Dress Easy’ (D.E) and focusing on the changing needs of its clients, to create menswear with an emphasis on a perfect cut and casual elegance.

Emmanuel Edudzie

Is Founder and Executive Director of Youth Empowerment Synergy, Ghana’s foremost youth development organisation delivering initiatives in youth policy, practice and research with wide-reaching impact across the nation’s ten regions.

A seasoned programme director, Emmanuel has more than 12 years of combined experience in both executive leadership and consulting positions with technical expertise in the areas of civil society development, youth policy and empowerment, education and employment. He is highly experienced in managing full-cycle donor-funded programmes from proposal writing to monitoring and evaluation.

Over the years, Emmanuel has demonstrated success serving in an advisory capacity and providing strategic guidance on policies and programmes resulting in the improvement of development effectiveness at all levels. In Ghana, this led to an expansion in the United Nation’s engagement with civil society and allowed for more civil society participation in the creation of country strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Emmanuel is internationally educated with Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees from Ghana and a second Master’s degree from the United Kingdom. He is a published expert and recipient of awards, scholarships and fellowships from the World Bank and the United Nations. He has also travelled widely, with business visits to over 35 countries in Africa, Europe, North America and Asia.
Lorraine Wright

Is a Director at UBS Wealth Manager and Investment bank, University of Oxford (SAID Business School) Executive, MBA Student and founder of the multi award winning University Gospel Choir of the Year (UGCY) operating in both UK and Ghana. At the age of 29 she has not only rapidly climbed the career ladder but has established a televised competition celebrating the talents of university students across the country.

Following her graduation from Brunel University, Lorraine went on to work in project management, working for the likes of Volkswagen head office and Accenture. Based on this and her community achievements during university, Lorraine was named as Powerful media’s top 10 Future Leaders. Not satisfied with working in the UK, Lorraine ventured to Chicago, USA to work for a distribution company managing their IT projects. Upon returning to the UK, Lorraine landed a graduate position with one of the top management consultancy firms (Accenture) where she was quickly promoted to a management consultant within a year.

In her client-facing role, she was subsequently head hunted by her client at the time – UBS. Three years later Lorraine was promoted to Director whilst on a secondment in Switzerland leading one of the banks high profile and strategic group wide IT programs with a 50 million CHF budget.

Lorraine runs University Gospel Choir of the Year, together with a team in the UK and in Ghana; they seek to provide an unprecedented platform for university gospel choirs to showcase their talents on a national scale. As an undergrad, she identified a gap in the market for University Choirs that needed opportunities to perform outside of their rehearsal rooms. In 2010 Lorraine created a platform for University Choirs to perform and showcase their talents.

Since its creation, UGCY has held five annual competitions, celebrating the talents of 4000+ individuals, with presence at over 35 UK and 15 Ghanaian universities. The UGCY platform in the UK has offered choirs nationwide opportunities including performances at the Royal Albert Hall, backing choir opportunities for the last 4 years on Britain’s Got Talent and The X factor, features by MOBO.com, BBC, attempts to break the world record provided choirs for firms like Deloitte, PWC and KPMG, performed at the BBC Proms and frequently work with media outlets like ITV and the BBC to name but a few. If you tune into X Factor UK, you would have seen our choirs feature as the backing choirs to a number of the contestants. UGCY is aired on ABN TV in UK and Viasat 1 in Ghana.
Reflections of the Future of Ghana

Youth Leadership Forum 2015
The Future of Ghana Youth Leadership Forum at Ashesi University was monumental in more ways than one. Since we returned to the UK from the forum in August 2015 we have shared our own personal experiences amongst ourselves. However it’s not until we actually take some time out to reflect as a collective that we realise the magnitude of what was achieved on those 3 days.

So let’s look back…….

Day 1 saw eager students under the age of 18 descend on Ashesi to take part in a day that was tailored to their immediate needs. First up they were treated to a morning Keynote address from Cecil Nutakor, CEO of Equinox Intercom Limited on the ‘irony of failure’.

During the morning we entered into a highly charged and passionate panel discussion on ‘Re-imagining Africa’s future’. Panellists included Me Firi Ghana’s own Creative Director, Samuel Mensah, Cecil Nutakor, Dr Yemisi Bokini Founder of the Daily Run series, Papa Akhurst founder of the BWP Series and Dansoaa Siaw-Misa, Sales Manager for Appolonia Development Company. Strong views were expressed which led to the Q&A session running well into the lunch hour. Later that afternoon attendees were treated to addresses from panellists Dansoaa and Cecil but it was clear what the highlight of the day was.

Day 3 started with an interactive and engaging session led by Seth Tandoh, founder of Leadership Ghana on leading yourself and others. Attendees discovered there were 6 key human personalities (social, technical, artistic, investigative, conventional and enterprising) of which each of us has three main ones. Seth’s probing questions made for a humorous and enjoyable session.

Arguably the highlight of the day was Romeo Effs, CEO of Aspyre Group Session on ‘How To create amazing’ which was uplifting as it was inspiring for attendees.

The result - the forum hashtag #FOGYLF2015 was trending in Ghana for 1 hour! The Ghana Think Foundation continued the empowerment theme by providing team members who individually mentored attendees. Later in the day we were joined by 2015 Future of Ghana pioneers Donald Ward, President of Era Global LLC and Elizabeth Patterson, founder of Girl Education initiative Ghana as well as Nii Atakora Mensah, Content Manager for Ghana Music who participated in a panel discussion on developing careers and using soft skills effectively.

The first day closed with a powerful closing address from Lord Michael Hastings, Global Head of KPMG UK.

"The forum has also reignited the passion I had for seeing Africa as a continent transform and blossom into one of the world’s greatest continents"

After lunch Ben Anim-Antwi, Director of Communications moderated a panel discussion on learning from leadership that included Award-winning journalist Ameyaw Debrah, Future of Ghana Programme Manager Sandra OseiAsare, founder of Leadership Ghana on leading yourself and others. Attendees discovered there were 6 key human personalities (social, technical, artistic, investigative, conventional and enterprising) of which each of us has three main ones. Seth’s probing questions made for a humorous and enjoyable session.
British High Commission (Accra) Comms Manager Estelle Sackey, Romeo Effs and CEO of the Sixth Sense Manifesto Nadia Takyiwaa-Mensah. The final panel discussion of the forum proved to be insightful as it was informative and inspiring!

Estelle Sackey was next up to deliver a session on the UK Government’s Chevening programme which allows foreign students to study UK universities. Arnold Sarfo-Kantanka, Chair of the Future of Ghana then wrapped up the day’s activities with speed networking session which got attendees off their seats and engaging with one and other.

It was an emotional end to the day/forum as the Future of Ghana Team wrapped up with closing remarks and acknowledged Volunteer co-ordinators Justice Kanu and Kalm Paul-Christian from Oxford University as well as the rest of Ashesi volunteers who all received certificates for their efforts. A few tears were shed as the magnitude of what had been achieved over three days slowly sank in.

The feedback we’ve received upon the conclusion of the forum have been mind-blowing. Below are snippets of selected feedback from attendees and volunteers;

- “The presentation and panel discussions were inspiring, motivating and soul stirring”

- “The forum has also reignited the passion I had for seeing Africa as a continent transform and blossom into one of the world’s greatest continents”

- “I would more than love to partner with Me Firi Ghana on your next project, even if I have to sweep the Halls for the forum, I gladly will”

- “You Elevated my mindset and skills to a whole new level. I feel more powered and ready. I believe, Africa needs a Change.”

- “Although am not Ghanaian, I believe that I am a global citizen thus the future of Ghana is relevant to me too”
Derrick Seyram Vormawor is a freelance Investment consultant and budding entrepreneur who attended the Future of Ghana Leadership forum in August 2015. At the time of the forum Derrick admitted he was depressed. He said “Honestly, I was at a very low point of my life. I was devastated back then and I was confused and a sad fellow. So I needed help. When I saw the Forum flyer I just got moved by my inner man to take the opportunity to be among people I didn’t know and use it as a getaway to clear my head.”

In light of this Derrick attended the two days of the forum he was eligible for with not much expectation. However by the end of the forum he was a man transformed. It was his first time at the prestigious Ashesi University so he was impressed straightaway by his surroundings. Having attended and participated in all the sessions with an open mind Derrick began adopt a new way of positive thinking and self belief.

"When I saw the Forum flyer I just got moved by my inner man to take the opportunity"

Looking back at his most memorable moment of the forum he recalled when Chair, Arnold Sarfo-Kantanka gave an impassioned speech at the end of the forum Derrick added; “when Arnold was giving his speech at the end of the forum. It was deep. He cried and I connected to that. I knew my wild dreams would come true someday too”.

Derrick is of no doubt of the impact the forum has had on his life ever since. He reflected by saying: “Once upon a time I was a sad fellow and at the point the forum came I had lost my job in a sad way which caused me lots of pains. Some few months down the lane after the leadership forum, by God’s grace, I own a growing global consulting firm with satisfied clients in Ghana, Nigeria and Dubai”

Derrick also manages his own NGO, is writing his first book titled; Testing the paint and speaks at various Youth events with the intention of developing an Entrepreneurial boot camp he is hoping will commence by 2017. Derrick stated; “ The leadership forum taught me how to move on like a river and gave me a new mindset which has now become my lifestyle. The good thing? I am still becoming...”
When the epiphany came,
It came to me in the sultry sea breeze,
Whilst I sat on a wooden deckchair
With white sand between my toes.
The sand was like granules of diamonds
Consuming my feet,
And I realised that Ghana
Is more than just a precious place with pathways to my past.

She holds my future in the ruby-maroon hue of her terrain;
In the aural cocktail of overzealous traffic and hawkers;
In the revered architecture of Nkrumah’s legacy.
My ambitions to dwell in her capital are
Accentuated by my happiness in her humidity,
Whilst locals express their hatred of the harsh heat of Harmattan.
My British accent is a double edged sword;

The catalyst for extortion in bustling markets,
And a fast track to employment in corporate offices.
Work is a concept that follows the same schedule
As the Cockerell and the Sun,
Leisurely carried out until dusk brings about a feeling of
satisfaction.
Maybe it’s the bitter chill of winters in London but
I am dissatisfied daily with this place of domicile.
The golden shores of Ghana’s coast are coaxing me to come
back to them.

Benjamin Bennett is a performance poet from South London. He is also a producer who has founded event brands 'Vocals & Verses', and 'Project 1957'.
Feature Interview

The Mind of a Young Creative Genius!

An exclusive interview with Papa Oppong
We caught up with the young, talented and in demand fashion designer/illustrator to find what makes the 25 year old creative tick! In this insightful interview Papa informs of his early influences, current ventures and future of up and coming illustrators.

FOG: What prompted your interest in fashion and design/ where you influenced by anybody?

PO: For as long as I can remember I've always been into fashion. I think my love for fashion was greatly influenced by my mother Cynthia and her sister “Aunt Stella”. I would watch them dress up and couldn’t help but notice how exciting the whole process was. I was fascinated by the colors, the prints, the shoes, the hair and all the little things that went into putting together a look. I would be more interested in playing with Barbie dolls than the soccer ball and this made growing up a little hard because I would get picked on a lot but I never really cared that much. I would try to draw the Barbie doll in their little outfits and that’s how my interest in fashion illustration grew. I would later go on to study visual art in Achimota school and then to Radford University College for a degree in Fashion Design.

"I always wanted to end up on CNN but I never actually thought I would. It was one of those moments I will cherish forever."

FOG: Was your choice to pursue a career in fashion supported by your peers and parents or did you come up against any resistance from naysayers?

PO: It did take some convincing in the beginning when I decided to pursue fashion. As usual, with Ghanaian parents, there was that conversation about studying to be a lawyer or doctor or something “safer”. After a lot of back and forth they decided to allow me pursue fashion design and that’s when I got into Radford University College in Ghana where I studied under Mrs Yvonne Ntiamoah who is a fantastic professor and Head of Department of fashion design at Radford. My friends always had my back as well. Lol. They always fed me with flattering comments and although they made my head bigger than it already is, they really did give me the encouragement I needed to keep going
FOG: How did your collaboration with renowned jewelry brand Swarovski come about and are the plans for any other collaboration's?

PO: That's a very interesting story - The collaboration with Swarovski was a very last minute arrangement. I actually didn't design the collection with Swarovski in mind at all. Let me tell you how it happened. During the course of last semester, we had a rep from Swarovski Ghana come give a seminar in school about Swarovski and how the elements are affixed onto garments. After the seminar, I had the chance of meeting the reps: Gisela and Judith. I had a little chat with them about the collection I was working on from there we decided it would be really cool to collaborate. “A Celebration of Joy” was a really fun collection. I wanted to push myself a little further. For that collection, I designed my very own batik print in my favourite colour: blue. There were two separate prints: the “Math Is A Problem” (because I absolutely suck at math - haha) print by Papa Oppong and the “Papa Oppong” monogram print. I also used cotton pique which was also dyed blue. The finished garments were then sent to Swarovski Ghana for crystal embellishment.

The collection was showcased at my school's second graduate fashion show held in June 2014 as part of the exhibition before the main graduate show began. Since I had done a runway showcase the year before, I decided to show this collection differently by having live models installed on podiums, pose as mannequins. I wanted to give the audience a fresh fashion experience and since the reviews were good, I guess it was a success. For now, there aren't any plans for future collaborations but we'll see....

FOG: Do you believe there are structures/resources in place in Ghana for creative people like yourself to thrive?

PO: Not really. I haven't noticed any resources or structures yet (correct me if I'm wrong). But I feel like now, with so many people venturing into the creative industry, there will soon be some startups aimed up promoting the work of talented individuals in the country.

FOG: What was the experience like being interviewed by a media powerhouse like CNN and are more people aware of your work because of it?

PO: Oh my God. What a surreal experience that was. I received an email back in April 2015 from the producer of the show African Voices and for about ten minutes I wasn't sure if it was spam or real stuff. I couldn't believe it. A month after I received the email, there was a camera crew in my home and I was actually shooting an interview with CNN. I always wanted to end up on CNN but I never actually thought I would.

It was one of those moments I will cherish forever. The interview aired in July and I was amazed at the number of viewers worldwide who reached out to congratulate me and show their support. It definitely helped push my name further to a much more global audience and for that I'm forever grateful to Amanda Sealy.
FOG: There are number of illustrators coming out of Ghana such as Peniel Enchill, Sarboat and Danny OW have you seen their work and do you expect to see more illustrators gain similar popularity?

PO: Yes I have seen the work of all those talented illustrators. Absolutely stunning. I especially love the work of Peniel (who I call Penie). I love her illustrations and how they depict the modern African woman in very real and honest situations. I feel like illustrators like Peniel and myself have given many young upcoming illustrators the confidence to put up their work and to show the world what they can do through platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. I definitely see more illustrators emerging in Ghana in the near future. I only hope this influx of new illustrators doesn’t end up becoming a fad where we lose quality to quantity.

FOG: What are your plans for the immediate future?

PO: I definitely want to go back to school and get a graduate degree still in fashion, in an international institution. I still feel like I still have a lot to learn. The fashion industry is very huge with so many components and I want to make sure I’m doing the right thing and am well equipped for the right sector. So yes- I really hope to get into grad school soon and polish up my knowledge in fashion and to gain a more global perspective on the industry.

PO: I definitely want to go back to school and get a graduate degree still in fashion, in an international institution. I still feel like I still have a lot to learn. The fashion industry is very huge with so many components and I want to make sure I’m doing the right thing and am well equipped for the right sector. So yes- I really hope to get into grad school soon and polish up my knowledge in fashion and to gain a more global perspective on the industry.
Zeinab is a Senior High Secondary (SHS) graduate who aims to fulfill her dream of becoming a journalist. Life became tough when her dad passed away in 2007. It was a very difficult period for the family as her mother who has no formal education struggled to take care of the family with the little money she gets from petty trading. However her fortunes changed when Campaign for Women Education (Camfed) identified her potential and stepped in to support her education and according to her “life was normal again”

She was inducted into the CAMA Network (Cama is the alunnae association for Camfed graduates) in June 2014 at the University for Development Studies, Tamale where she received very valuable training on leadership.

She eventually became a member of the Selection Committee of Camfed to support in the selection and distribution of bursary items to Camfed beneficiaries every year. As a CAMA member and the District Cama Chairperson for Tamale Metro, Zeinab has organized and participated in community seminars and advocacy drive on health, gender, social and financial literacy that have impacted hundreds of youths in her district.

As an Ambassador of CAMA, she sees the need to educate her peers and the youth in her community on contemporary youth issues such as the safe use of ICT. As a trained Camfed learner Guide under the “My Better World” Programme, she volunteers her time during the week to support students in her local senior high school on how to be attentive, empathic, wise and empower themselves. The idea is to help the girls excel at school and to also help them to overcome the challenges faced by adolescence.

Zeinab was among 14 Cama members who were selected to join the 1st YALI cohort to successfully participate in the YALI Regional Leadership Centre (RLC) training at GIMPA in Accra from 2nd August to 4th September.

Her long term aspiration is to become a renowned journalist in Ghana, a role model and a source of inspiration to young girls in her community. She simply wants to leave a mark of excellence in everything she does and the people she engages.
Elijah Amoo Addo fondly called "the doctor in the kitchen" is a celebrity chef, social entrepreneur and philanthropist. He has over six years experience in the culinary profession and has worked hard to rise through the ranks of the profession. Elijah is the Founder of Food for All Ghana. Although he is a Chef by profession, his passion for humanity made him quit working as a Chef and has now dedicated his time for charity.

He has worked and partnered with hotels and restaurants such as Chase, +233 Jazz bar, Lisa hotel, Burger and Relish and many others. He was the acting General Secretary of the Greater Accra chefs association and Ghana chefs association. He is the inspiring founder of Chefs for Change Ghana foundation, an NGO that seeks to promote the culinary profession in Ghana and also promotes Ghanaian ingredients in meeting international standards.

As Director of Food for All Ghana campaign, he seeks to build West Africa’s first food bank in Ghana to create sustainable means of nutrition for the vulnerable in society while reducing food wastage and hunger. Elijah is also the Regional Director for Aregala Hellas, A global chef’s brigade also known as "Chefs without Borders. He has worked with corporate bodies such as Nestle, Finatrade, GADCO, Ghana Cocoa Board, GH1, Insel communication. It is estimated that through his foundation Elijah has fed over 50,000 street kids and other vulnerable members of society.
Social Entrepreneur Emmanuel Nyame is fast becoming one of Ghana’s premier young entrepreneurs. Bright, energetic, driven and, above all, passionate about giving back to his country. Emmanuel has been recognized as a critical component in supporting the creation of new jobs that are adding tangible economic impact to the Ghana economy and increasing the quality of life for those that work for them. He runs one of StartUp Cup’s most successful accelerator programs - the Ghana StartUp Cup.

For the past four years, he’s engaged startups through business model competitions which provide businesses with the right tools and resources to grow their businesses and has drawn private sector support to sustain interest in working with Startups in Ghana. StartUp Cup is a partner to U.S. Department of State’s Global Entrepreneurship Program, an effort to spur entrepreneurship across nations in the world. He also leads the development of one of UN Foundation’s projects, +Social Good in Ghana, helping foster plans of achieving the SDG goals.

With a background in Economics, Emmanuel looks at developing the startup and business community in Ghana and beyond through innovative programs, best practices in managing start-up businesses, as well as attracting funding for these start-ups. With this notion of supporting start-ups, Emmanuel has partnered with stakeholders, investors, and a passionate team to make this happen.

Emmanuel’s efforts have received quite a remarkable recognition globally, which includes his inclusion in Fast Company’s “Lessons learned: Six Millennial Entrepreneurs”. He is a Kairos Global Fellow, Africa. co fellow, 2016 Eduzine Global ACE Young Achiever, Contributor to Award-winning and Best-Selling book, 2 Billion Under 20, Start-ups & Entrepreneurship Columnist for the Business & Financial Times and a UP Global Leader.
Dr. Kojo Twum Nimako is an Old Boy of Adisadel College and he believes his character of excellence and perseverance were developed during his days on the hill (of Adisco). He was studious and won many accolades in Adisco, including the much coveted overall best science student award in his final year. His leadership skills were also evident while in Adisco as he was appointed Head Prefect of the College for the 2003/04 academic year.

He continued on to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, where he spent the next 6 years of his life studying medicine. His academic astuteness was rewarded in his 5th year of medical school with a scholarship to the Oxford University Medical School, in the United Kingdom, for an elective program.

He performed creditably during the program and made a good impression of himself, school and country on his supervising tutors.

In 2014, Dr. Nimako, together with his wife Andrea, founded the NGO Helping Hand Medical Outreach (HHMO), to provide health education to the masses and offer free medical care to the underprivileged in the Ghanaian society.

He serves as the Executive Director of HHMO and is currently overseeing the implementation of the organization’s flagship project, “The Stunting Hunger Project”, which is an ambitious quest to drastically reduce the incidence of chronic childhood malnutrition in Ghana.

He is also the Chief Medical Correspondent of a popular Accra-based radio station, Citi FM and hosts an online medical chat show known as the Citi Health Chat, with a target audience of over 200,000. He also writes weekly health articles for citifmonline.com, with over 45 articles published so far. His articles have also been featured by other electronic and print media houses like peacefmonline.com and the Daily Express newspaper.

Dr. Nimako is also the Editor of healthbloggh.com, a health education/information website tuned to the Ghanaian context. Dr. Nimako envisions a world where health-seeking behaviour is more proactive than reactive, and seeks to bring this to fruition through his work both in and out of the consulting room.
Linda is the co-founder founder of Stem BEES: STEMbees is a non-profit organisation created in response to the tremendous gender gap prevalent in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. STEMbees seeks to encourage and mentor more young African women to pursue their dreams and careers in STEM.

STEMbees ultimate goal is to improve the numbers of women pursuing STEM-related courses and working in STEM fields. This requires generating greater interest and excitement about the many opportunities in STEM through organized career fairs in high schools, camps, after-school clubs, and mentoring from STEM professionals.

She is also the Co-Founder of Verstracker: Vestracker is the information management service for small and multinational freight forwarders. They allow forwarders to manage all their internal agency operations in one place. Freight forwarders can now forecast with accurate internal agency analytics, track consignments from multiple carriers at one place, facilitate collaboration between agents and principals to provide client visibility.
Meet a Pioneer

Sam Effah
27 years old, Canada

As an Olympic level athlete training towards the 2016 Olympic games, Sam Effah’s profile gives him a special and unique opportunity to influence others. He is a proud Ghanaian-Canadian ambassador. For the last two years he has taught monthly lessons to 6 classrooms across Canada while being an active professional athlete.

According to Sam every child has the right to learn the process of excellence, yet many students in underserved communities face significant barriers to gaining these critical skills. Sam reduces the barriers through Classroom Champions as mentor to many.

Sam is also the Ambassador for Right to Play, an organisation which uses the power of play to educate and empower children to overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease in disadvantaged communities. He is especially passionate about the work he does with Right to Play because of its Ghanaian Connections and the community leaders developed as a result.

In 2010, he clocked 10.06 in the 100 metres, making him one of the fastest Canadians of all-time. And, since that result came so early in his career, he seemed destined to join an elite club before too long but injuries hampered his progress somewhat. He has however been on the comeback trail and is on course to take part in this year’s Olympics.

In November 2015 Sam was a recipient of the Athletes in Excellence Award from The Foundation for Global Sports Development (GSD). This prestigious award is designed to honour competing and retired athletes who have been role models, leaders and champions not just in sports, but in their communities by selflessly giving back through mentorship and outreach activities.
The Future of the
Black Stars
2017 looks promising for Ghana depending on where you stand on the political spectrum. Will Ghana have a new president or will the incumbent party be re-elected? Whatever the outcome the Black Stars will be poised to go a step further in their campaign to win AFCON 2017 in Gabon.

In the past and with some justification, the Black Stars have been criticised for their performances on the pitch and their activities off the pitch during major tournaments. The issue with players bonuses and football officials which transpired during the 2014 World cup in Brazil, prompted some Ghanaians to question the patriotism of the national team. Allegedly the Black Stars coerced the government into sending $3 million on a plane to settle players bonuses, before their crucial match against Portugal during the 2014 world cup. The aftermath of the World cup created a misconception that the team was money driven, especially at a time when the country was facing financial problems.

Most of the players are young with a lot of experience playing week in week out for their respective clubs. Players like Jonathan Mensah who is currently linked with a move to the premier league, possess all the qualities and attributes to become one of the best defenders from Africa.

Another player who has been Ghana’s most consistent player for both club and country is Andre Ayew, the son of former Black Stars captain Abedi Pele. Ayew has displayed some solid performances for Swansea this season and will be a key figure for the Black Stars for AFCON 2017. Ayew’s younger brother Jordan Ayew who in the past has been heavily criticised for making poor decisions in matches has shown signs of maturity as a player since joining Aston Villa.

One phenomenon facing the Ghanaian national team is the lack of local based players breaking into the national team, at the finals of the 2015 AFCON, the starting 11 players for the national team consisted of players who are based abroad. The lack of investment and infrastructure in the domestic leagues in Ghana has made it very difficult for local players to progress to the national team. The Ghana football association (GFA) have received criticism for showing more interest in the national team and not showing enough interest in the domestic league. In an interview with Joy news in Ghana, GFA spokesperson Saani Daara urged rich people in Ghana to invest in some of the local clubs. He said “I am asking myself why someone like Ibrahim Mahama has not been attracted by any club to come on board and invest. I think there are people with that capability to take over clubs.”

The Black Stars will again carry the hopes of the nation on their shoulders as they seek to qualify for the 2017 tournament. The current squad who made it to the finals in 2015 will be more determined to bring the cup home to parade on the streets of Accra.

Jones Awuah is a Sports Journalist and Founder of the Sportsfrenzee media platform.

“I am asking myself why someone like Ibrahim Mahama has not been attracted by any club to come on board and invest. I think there are people with that capability to take over clubs.”
Feature Interview

Feeding and Educating a Nation!

An Interview with Elijah Amoo Addo
With ambitions to build West Africa’s first sustainable food bank, the celebrity chef, social entrepreneur and philanthropist Elijah Amoo Addo is on mission to create tangible change. Known as the “doctor in the kitchen” as well as feeding the vulnerable in Ghana he is simultaneously educating the population on food wastage. Future of Ghana caught up with this inspiring changemaker to get the lowdown on his previous career as chef, the creation food 4 all agency and his vision for Ghana.

FOG: Food 4 All Ghana is paving the way for Ghana’s first food recovery bank how much pride do you have in that and are there any plans to expand to other countries in West Africa?

EAA: When it comes to creating sustainable means of nutrition for the vulnerable in Ghana, I am not just proud but also get a sense of fulfillment in solving a generational challenge of food wastage and hunger. Food for All Ghana program is on record as the first food recovery bank in West Africa and the third in Africa, our vision is to build food banks across Africa and so in the future we will expand to other parts of the continent.

"We will keep organizing the longest table annually to bring Ghanaians together to address the issue of food wastage and hunger in our society."

FOG: How did being a Chef aid you in starting Food 4 all Ghana and where there any transferable skills?

EAA: Being a chef afforded me the opportunity to have firsthand insight into the amount and scale of food been wasted along our food supply chain and my desire for solution drove me into reading more and working in finding lasting solutions to the inefficiencies within our food supply chain. Also coming into contact with a mentally challenged in society.

FOG: What are the three biggest lessons you have learned in your career(s) to date?

EAA: Food is the only fuel of life and as far as life thrives there will be the need for food in our world hence humans must pay attention to its importance to life.

Finally, as the world’s population increase in the face of climate change, creating sustainable means of nutrition for all of humanity will ensure that the human race thrives on the face of the earth long after we are dead and gone.

A chef must be seen as the doctor in the kitchen and the profession must be regarded and improved to help in preserving our food culture for future generations.
FOG: What were some of the key highlights from the “World’s longest table” event in October last year and do you feel people are more aware of food wastage as a result?

EAA: The longest table on UN world food day afforded me the opportunity to meet and work with great sons and daughters of Ghana. It was at this project that I saw the desire of Ghanaian youth to serve the vulnerable in our society given the opportunity.

I believe even though we couldn’t break the world record the message went down with Ghanaians but more could have been done with the media playing their role and for that purpose we will keep organizing the longest table annually to bring Ghanaians together to address the issue of food wastage and hunger in our society.

Government through the FDA and Ministry of Food and agriculture is now considering the importance of food recovery as a social welfare tool hence there has been series of meetings with them. Stakeholders on the other hand have been donating more food and in May 2016 we will have the 1st Food for All Ghana conference to come together as stakeholders in addressing the inefficiencies within our supply chain and the importance of food recovery in Ghana so there is hope.

FOG: Ghana celebrates national volunteer day on 21 September each year with a lot of youth participation usually. How important are volunteers to your organisation?

EAA: Volunteers are the heart of our program. At Food for All Ghana program we see volunteerism as the solution to the challenges of humanity.

Our program brings together young Ghanaians with a desire to serve the vulnerable in society and that is why Food for All Ghana is a shared social responsibility.

FOG: In what ways do you believe the youth can contribute and be a part of the development of Ghana?

EAA: Youth contribution to the development of Ghana is very important and I believe more could be done by our leaders to encourage our participation in the development agenda. The toil of every father is for the benefit of his children and so he involves them in planning for that future and I strongly believe given the right opportunity by our fathers, the youth will contribute to our development agenda positively. Personally as a youth, “I have a dream of an Africa where my sons and daughters will not know hunger”.

EAA: The campaign so far has really gone down well with Ghanaians nowadays calling each day to get food saving and preservation tips. I believe we are at the point where the media in Ghana have to play a critical role in ensuring the message gets down to the ordinary citizen.

"I have a dream of an Africa where my sons and daughters will not know hunger"
Join the MFG Members Network today and connect with likeminded Ghanaian entrepreneurs & professionals, access exclusive events, opportunities, enterprise support opportunities and member delegation trips abroad

Join the MFG Members Network today:
www.mefirighana.com
Abraham Attah is a 14 year old Ghanaian Actor and a student. He made his feature film debut in Netflix’s original feature film ‘Beasts of No Nation’ directed by Emmy Award winning director Cary Fukunaga and starring Hollywood Actor Idris Elba. He played the leading role of a child soldier Agu. Abraham Attah was awarded Marcello Mastroianni Best Young Actor Award at the 72nd Venice International Film Festival.

He was also awarded the Rising Star Award from the Black Film Critics Circle. He was recently awarded as the Best Breakthrough Performance at the National Board of Review Awards. He was the Best Actor and Discovery of the Year at the Ghana Movie Awards. He has been nominated for prestigious awards such as Awards Circuit Community Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, Gold Derby Film Award for Best Breakthrough Performer, NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actor in a Motion Picture, Independent Spirit Award for Best Male Lead, Critics’ Choice Movie Award for Best Young Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture, Washington D.C. Area Film Critics Association Award for Best Youth performance and St. Louis Film Critics Award for Best Actor. He was honoured with an invitation to present an award at the 88th Oscar Award.

Attah also starred in a Hollywood shot film ‘Out of the Village’ which was Executive Produced by Bryan Singer (X-Men).

In November 2015, he joined the ensemble cast of Shane Carruth’s third film, The Modern Ocean.

Aside from doing well in his acting career, he is doing well in school, is very humble, respectful and staying positive.
Meet a Pioneer

Yvonne Haizel
25 years old, UK

Yvonne has a pure passion for Africa, and a mission to improve its development opportunities. Using her 1st class honours degree in Economics & Finance, experience with emerging markets in companies such as Goldman Sachs and combining that with her love for Africa, has secured her a role at Mitsui & Co., as an African investment strategist focused on telecoms, healthcare and education.

With this expertise, she plans to improve the quality of Ghana’s education and healthcare. One recent investment she secured in her role was with Afrimax, who are set to be the largest 4G network provider in Africa, with licenses in 14 countries. Yvonne has also started her own business Eminence Advisory which supports entrepreneurs across Africa to test and grow innovative business ideas that create jobs and improve lives. Key projects include the development of high impact start-ups within the technology and agriculture sectors, example is UncleTobi which is an online farmers market which allows traders to produce and sell crop cross Nigeria.

Although Yvonne’s journey has just began, with her advisory experience as the Founder of Eminence Advisory and being an African Strategist at Mitsui, She is working to apply her skills to influence fellow Ghanaians by doing public speaking engagements and is also working on her own large scale agro-tourism project in Awutu-Senya, Ghana.

As Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank said, ‘Harnessing Africa’s agricultural potential can serve as the much-needed game changer of the continent’s economy’. Yvonne was inspired to invest in agriculture by one of her clients, and she intends to use the Future of Ghana (FOG) platform to inspire others. Having the support of the Agriculture ministry and District chiefs in Awutu-Senya, she believes the project will be a success on completion and will serve as an example to others in the Diaspora.
Described by former United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan as “an embodiment of youth leadership”, Shadrack wouldn’t let anything come between him and his dreams. As the son of a peasant farmer and charcoal seller, he had two options; become a farmer or start a family. Education was secondary.

However, he broke away from tradition, chose education and continued on to graduate from the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) with a Biology degree in 2015 as Class Flagbearer. At Penn, he was one of five students in his graduating class awarded the prestigious President’s Engagement Prize to establish a school for girls and community hospital in his village.

In college, Shadrack’s background inspired him to establish Students for A Healthy Africa (SAHA), one of the continent’s largest student-health movements. SAHA has so far provided free health insurance for HIV/AIDS orphans in Ghana and constructed a health clinic and potable water well in two communities in rural Nigeria.

He also co-founded the African Research Academies for Women to bridge the wide gap between male and female scientists in Africa through annual summer research institutes for college women.

These initiatives have merited numerous awards and recognition, including a prize from the United Nations and multiple invitations to meet former President Bill Clinton and other world leaders at the annual Clinton Global Initiative.

In August 2013, he was awarded the Discovering Youth Leadership Fellowship from the Commonwealth Secretariat, for his excellent work on youth involvement in improving Africa’s healthcare.

Frimpong was later appointed an Associate Fellow of the Royal Commonwealth Society in January 2015. His work has been featured in USA Today, Philadelphia Inquirer, NextCity and the Clinton Global Initiative.

Shadrack is also a musician, an HIV biomedical researcher and an aspiring liver transplant surgeon.
Sangu Delle is an Entrepreneur, Author, Clean Water Activist and Soros Fellow.

He is Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Golden Palm Investments (GPI); an investment holding and advisory company focused on building world class companies in Africa. GPI operates companies in high growth industries and funds promising start-ups that can have social impact and generate jobs. GPI has backed startups such as SOLO Mobile in Nigeria, mPharma in Ghana and Stawi Foods in Kenya.

Sangu is also the co-founder of Cleanacwa, which is a non-profit working in underdeveloped communities in Ghana to make sure that clean water and sanitation, basic human rights, are provided.

Recognized by Forbes Top 30 Most Promising Entrepreneurs in Africa 2015 Sangu has received many accolades over the years Euromoney’s African Rising Star, Future Awards Africa’s Young African of the Year, Forbes Top 30 Most Promising Entrepreneurs in Africa 2014.

Time/Bentley Tomorrow 25 Future Leaders Award, and Face2Face Young African Committed to Excellence Award African Leadership Awards - 2015 Social Innovation Leadership Award

He is also TEDx Global Fellow with a TEDx talk at over 750,000 views currently.
Kirstie is the founder of The Nana Project, a platform that captures and shares the varied histories of Ghanaians. The project takes ordinary people’s stories and amplifies them through videos, photos, and articles. The Nana Project’s mission is to preserve, archive, and share firsthand accounts of Ghanaian history.

They give Ghanaians of all backgrounds and beliefs the opportunity to record the stories of our people. They do this to remind each other of our shared culture, to strengthen and build connections, to teach the value of listening, and to weave into the fabric of our culture the understanding that our history matters.

Prior to this, Kirstie was the Executive Officer of the Diaspora African Women's Network. Kirstie has also written a publication on the The Remittance Intentions of Second-Generation Ghanaian-Americans for the SIT Graduate Institute.

She has an invested interest and expertise in Diaspora relations and contribution to Ghana and Africa as a whole. This work led her to conduct research for the International Organization of Migration as a consultant on the Nigerian Diaspora Health and Education Professionals Mapping Exercise in the United States.
Maxwell is the Founder of Mpawa, a job searching application for employment of blue collar workers in Ghana through SMS messages – bridging the gap between recruiters and employees. The application has also now extended to Kenya.

As a result of his work with Mpawa Maxwell was nominated for a GUBA Development Award in 2013. The platform has about 12000 jobseekers on its books and approx about 60 employers using mPawa to recruit blue-collar workers. The World Bank recognized mPawa as one of the Top 50 Global Innovation entrepreneurs from emerging markets in 2014 and they were selected to pitch at the Global Forum on Innovation and Entrepreneurship in South Africa.

Maxwell also founded Efrem Technologies is calving a niche into the development of enterprise and customized desktop to cloud base applications suitable for the movement of many medium size businesses to full blown organizations.

Their technologies affect diverse sectors of Engineering, Manufacturing, Production and Institutional operations leading to realizing the core goals of our clients. With a strong youthful team with diverse backgrounds, Efrem Technologies is poised to remake most business operations flexible and produce quality results.
Positive thinking:

The Seed of Successful Leadership

by Fausat Mimisola Hassan
The Good Book tells us that “As a man thinks so is he”. Despite the popularity of this biblical saying, people seldom grasp its true essence. We live in a world in which we find ourselves exposed to many negative things through the media without realising the damage this is causing to our mental attitude.

“Do you see the glass as half empty or half full?” This infamous question has been thrown to many of us - challenging our perception, our way of reasoning and our attitude towards life. The answer one provides to this question has a direct correlation to their capacity to think positively, giving insight into one’s perspective and outlook on life. In other words, the way we think and perceive things, as well as the choices we make, can have a major impact on our performance and our ability to accomplish great things.

The mind is an incredibly complex system liable to programming, and what you install into that system will determine your level of productivity. What comes out of your mind is a reflection of what you put into it. There are many challenges that are encountered by every individual. With this in mind, it is imperative to come to the realisation that it is not the difficulty of situations that matters, but the manner in which you perceive things and then choose to respond to them that is the key.

According to many studies into the Psychology of peak performance, most engineers, surgeons, successful athletes and artists are great users (both consciously and subconsciously) of affirmations and visualisations to improve their skills. This method of mind training is one that has been applied by many legendary leaders such as Nelson Mandela, who wrote on how it assisted him in maintaining a positive attitude throughout a period of imprisonment which spanned almost three decades. In his autobiography, the freedom fighter, the former president of the Republic of South Africa stated “I thought continually of the day when I would walk free. I fantasised about what I would like to do.” This indicates that in order to be an effective leader, one must utilise the power of visualisation to their advantage to improve their attitude.

One of the major steps that an effective leader must take in the pursuit of their goals is to learn to analyse their attitude and the effects it can have on their performance, relationships and the people they are leading. Regardless of whether one is a current leader or a future leader, it is important to acknowledge that a positive attitude is everything as it governs your perceptions towards the world and how the world perceives you.

Looking at the history of many influential leaders, it is evident that their attitude led to their success. Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan is a prime example of an influential leader who maintained a positive attitude throughout his reign. At the age of 17, he learned an incredible life lesson in school.

One day, his headmaster walked into the classroom and put up a white sheet of paper, approximately one metre by one metre in its dimensions. At the corner of this piece of paper was a small black dot. The headmaster asked his classroom full of students a simple question: “What do you see?” Without hesitation, the entire class answered and said “A black dot!” The headmaster asked rhetorically “So not a single one of you saw the broad white sheet of paper?” going on to advise the students “Do not go through life with that attitude.”

This anecdote on positive thinking comes from the history of a prominent man who climbed every single step of the ladder to success to become an unforgettable leader. Evidently, Kofi Annan developed a method of mind training that implanted a set of positive perspectives and ideas that worked together to eliminate habituated behaviours and negative perceptions to help him deliver to the best of his ability in the leadership position he was in before his final resignation. Therefore, on your own journey to becoming a successful leader of the present or the future, remember that your thought life will be a key factor in determining your accomplishments. In the words of another great leader Oprah Winfrey “The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude.”

Fausat Mimisola Hassan or ‘Mimi inspired’ as she is known is a speaker, writer and an aspiring Counsellor. A frequent contributor to the Me Firi Ghana Blog she delights in inspiring her peers and displays wisdom beyond her years.
Dine Diaspora:

Connecting African Diaspora Leaders
“Let’s do lunch” is a popular one-liner heard among leaders when they meet for the first time. It’s seldom clear if this phrase is a genuine gesture or a simple act of courtesy that has become a norm in professional settings. Whether these lunches occur or not, the habitual comment highlights the role that food plays in connecting people. A meaningful conversation over food can turn a mere professional acquaintance into a friend or business partner. The act of sharing a meal with someone is a powerful occurrence that enables networking beyond exchanging business cards at conferences and meetings. For African diaspora leaders, networking over food has always been a critical way to not only make connections, but to celebrate shared culture and heritage. History tells the story of a lunch between two great African diaspora leaders - Kwame Nkrumah and Martin Luther King, Jr. During Ghana’s independence celebrations in 1957, the men met for lunch in Accra, Ghana. King recounted in a 1959 letter to Nkrumah:

Words are inadequate for me to express my appreciation to you for the hospitality that you extended to me and my wife. It was most gracious of you to take time out of your extremely busy schedule and receive us for lunch at your residence.

As King and Nkrumah ate in 1957, other African diaspora leaders have connected over food in similar ways. Today’s leaders require meaningful connections in a fast-paced, technology-driven society where relationship building can be difficult. Therefore, Dine Diaspora convenes African diaspora leaders for dining experiences that provide a platform for valuable connections as they enjoy the flavors of the diaspora. Known as “Signature Dinners,” these intimate gatherings of diverse Diaspora leaders are curated to create a space where leaders meet their peers and discuss topics from identity to business opportunities.

With each bite, the table of multi-generational leaders, from seasoned civic and business leaders to start-up entrepreneurs, build relationships that extend beyond the table.

Food is an integral part of each Signature Dinner. Paired with great conversation, a featured African Diaspora chef is woven into each experience. Storytelling through food, guests are lead through the chef’s culinary journey that can take them from Ghanaian jollof rice to Senegalese poulet yassa. What is on the menu is just as important as who is at the table. As a result, every detail of the evening, from the food and invite list, to the focus of the discussion, is carefully planned and executed.
Founded in 2014, Dine Diaspora has convened over 40 Diaspora leaders through its Signature Dinners and helped facilitate business partnerships, mentorship, and friendships among African Diaspora leaders. These leaders represent over 15 African countries, the United States, and the Caribbean, with diverse professional sectors from health to government and technology. While the dinners serve as the catalyst for connections, the real magic happens after the events when leaders who met at Signature Dinners, continue building relationships and working together in different ways.

So, imagine being invited to a dinner with Nkrumah and King at the height of their leadership and discussing Pan-Africanism, leadership, cross-cultural differences, and the latest African novels. Imagine an unforgettable meal that complements the robust discourse.

Now, imagine leaving the dinner with the confidence that you had not only learned from them, but had made a connection that could result in advancing your leadership. This type of experience is what Dine Diaspora brings to life through its dinners. While you cannot dine with Nkrumah or King today, there is no shortage in African Diaspora leaders. From now on, instead of saying “let’s do lunch” to the next African Diaspora leader you meet, you can have a seat at the Dine Diaspora Signature Dinner and make a lasting connection one bite at a time.

Nina Oduro, Co-founder, Dine Diaspora

Dine Diaspora is a contemporary lifestyle and events company that creates dynamic experiences around food, culture, and heritage. This article was originally published on Medium.com
MOVE FOR GREATNESS

GOLD COAST

SPRING/SUMMER '16 COLLECTION

www.houseofmfg.com
info@houseofmfg.com
Jennifer Addo’s work and ambition are in keeping with ethos the of the FOG (Future of Ghana) recognition. She is currently pursuing a master’s in public health at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health while completing her medical degree at Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM).

At IUSM, she was awarded the Professionalism Award given to a student who exudes exemplary professionalism skills. This owing to the fact she worked as an instructor in the anatomy laboratory in medical education sessions.

Internationally, Jennifer completed a study abroad program at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Ghana, performing an observational study on hypertension in pregnancy. On a trip El Salvador, she created an Institutional Review Board to look for ways to improve health outcomes, focusing on women’s health.

Her work on health equity resulted in recognition by American Medical Association, being honoured with the Physicians of Tomorrow Award. Jennifer also holds a bachelor’s degree in brain, behaviour, & cognitive science from University of Michigan.
John Armah is empowering Young Ghanaian Entrepreneurs with Training, Investment and Strategies to tackle some of Africa’s biggest problems in the Health, Technology, Agriculture, Services and Arts sector. As a Business Strategist, Investor and C.E.O. he is building the capacity of Youth Entrepreneurs in Ghana and attracting the needed investments to them helping to redefine Ghana’s Startup Space.

Put simply John Armah is an Award-winning Entrepreneur and Business Strategist with a passion for Startups Development in Africa. He was ranked as the 27th Most Influential Ghanaian by ETV Ghana (2012), Winner of the Ideas Award by Legacy and Legacy (2012), Named as part of 20 under 40 Most Influential Business Leaders in Ghana by award-winning Business World Magazine (2015). Recipient of the Global Young CEO’s Award for Entrepreneurship Development in Africa at the Young CEO’s Business Summit (2015), National Union of Ghana Students Vice Chancellor Young Achievers Award for Entrepreneurship Development (2015), Pioneer and Chairman of the Africa Youth Economic Forum, Model African Union Commission. He is a member of the World Economic Forum-Global Shapers Accra Hub, Africa 2.0, Member of the Advisory Board of the Next Wave Africa Women Empowerment Program, former Business Radio Talk Show Host and a member of the African Community of Practice for Managing Development Results and the Youth 4 Results network in Africa. He was also named in the Junior Chamber International 10 Outstanding Young Persons award in December 2015.

John is a regular panellist, speaker on Entrepreneurship, New Business Development and Policy related issues and has addressed the World Economic Forum on Public Private Partnerships, Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Africa Innovate Forum, The World Bank Unemployment Forum in Abuja, the Annual Africa for Results and Annual Meeting of the African Community of Practice for Managing for Development Results in Harare, Zimbabwe, Commonwealth meeting on National Youth Policies by Ministers of Youth and Sports in the ASEAN region in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia, Panellist, MasterCard Foundation/Youth Save Financial Inclusion Forum among others and facilitated a number of key youth programs between the youth, Government and Development Partners among others.
Hassan M. Salih is an Architect, 3D visualizer and videographer currently pursuing a Mphil. in Urban design at the KNUST, Ghana. He co-founded DZYN Studios in 2007, an architecture visualization and graphic design company based in Ghana while he was still a student. He is currently involved in various projects towards sparking a creative revolution in Ghana due to his strong belief that creativity and design are the answers to most of our national development issues. This strong belief led to the founding of MESH Ghana, a non-profit organization that focuses on creating opportunities for MEETING, EXPLORING and SHARING among creative’s with the aim of harnessing that creative energy towards national development. In recognition of his efforts in organizing and empowering the creative community in Ghana, he has delivered a guest lecture at Ashesi University, been featured on the popular KSM TV Show Over the last few years he has organized 5 MESH Confabs which bring together over 200 Ghanaian creative’s to share ideas and inspire each other, two MESH Lab projects towards shaping the built environment and published over 50 videos on MESHTV spotlighting outstanding creative individuals, events and projects.

Being an architect, he is very passionate about the built environment and anything related to it because he believes that it is only when we have a sound environment that we can live our lives to their full potential. He is a very optimistic Ghanaian and this manifests in his belief that we can turn Ghana into a modern utopia in the next ten years as long as we harness Ghanaian creativity to its full potential.
Kwasi moved to the USA in 2007. He was studying Planning at KNUST at the time but transferred to the University of Connecticut to study accounting. He managed to finish the 4-year Accounting program in 2 and half years with stellar grades. Even before he left business school at UCONN, he had been offered a job with Deloitte where he worked for 3 years. He currently works as a senior associate at Price water house Coopers in New York.

Kwasi is a certified public accountant in the state of Connecticut and New York and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He is the founder and president of Books for Africa’s Future (BfAF), a New York registered non-for-profit with a mission to provide books and learning supplies to children in underserved communities in Africa. Their mission is achieved through donation by individuals, libraries, publishers and organizations and also, tremendous volunteers who donate time to sort and packages books for shipping.

Since its formation in September 2013, BfAF has given approximately 5000 books to schools and libraries in Ghana and Swaziland.
Paul Frimpong is a Chartered Economist (Ch.E.), Certified Economic Policy Analyst (CEPA) and a Fellow of the American Academy of Financial Management (FAAFM) of the global economics professional body, Association of Certified Chartered Economists (ACCE- Inc.)

He has written and published over 50 African economic development affairs related articles in both local and international media platforms. In 2015, he was named Africa’s Youngest Entrepreneur for the month of May 2015 by M Akwande, a South African based social development tracking website and also received the ExLA Young Achievers Awards for Trade, Business and Social Entrepreneurship.

Among his current roles Paul is the curator for the Africa-China Investment Forum 2016. The forum will bring together African Heads of States and Ministers of States from Africa and China, C.E.Os of top African and Chinese investment firms, executives of state owned enterprises (SOEs) and private project owners, counsel from international and domestic investment firms, banks and corporates to examine opportunities across the two regions through a series of panel discussions and networking sessions. The forum will be chaired by H.E. John A. Kufuor, former President of the Republic of Ghana and will feature five sitting Presidents from Africa
A Global Shaper of the World Economic Forum and 2014 Anzisha Prize Fellow, Winifred is a 21-year-old social entrepreneur and a change-maker who started her entrepreneurial journey at the age of 15. She is the co-founder of the award winning Ghana Bamboo Bikes Initiative which was nurtured as a project idea of President Clinton’s Global Initiative University into an award winning social enterprise that has since won 10 international awards including the UN Habitat/Dubai International Best Practice Award 2015, 2013 UNFCCC Momentum For Change Award, World Business and Development Award 2012 amongst others.

Her innovation has created direct employment opportunities for 35 bamboo bike assembling receiving a higher wage than most other Ghanaians in similar industries.

Winifred Kyei Selby sits on the boards of the EPF Educational Empowerment Initiative and the Dawadawa Fund. She has just been conferred with an Associate Fellowship of the Royal Commonwealth Society. She was also selected as Youth Honoree of the World of Children Awards held in November 2015 in New York, USA.

Winifred has travelled extensively worldwide and has shared platforms with notable international figures such as the Executive Director of the World Trade Organization, Deputy Ruler of Dubai who presented the Dubai International Award to her in February 2015 and the UN Secretary General Ban Kin Moon whom she lobbied to ride one of her bamboo bike and generated international publicity worldwide.

She was invited personally by the President of the United States Barack Obama to be part of the 2015 Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Nairobi, Kenya and was the brain behind Ghana Bamboo Bikes video documentary which recently went viral with more than 23 million views on facebook.

Meet a Pioneer

Winifred Selby
21 years old, Ghana
Feature Interview

Spice up your life!

An interview with Essie Bartels
Miss Bartels known as “the spice goddess” love affair with spices began as a little girl, helping her mom cook with recipes passed down through generations. As her experiments with spices grew, so did the demand for her homemade sauces that will uniquely flavour any home-cooked meal. This inspired her to create the Essiespice sauce brand. The road has not been easy for Essie but it’s safe to say she is on her way to building a global food empire. In this interview she documents her journey to the present day.

FOG: In your opinion what is the single biggest challenge being an entrepreneur and why?

EB: Structure. I think we can say an entrepreneur needs a lot of things. They need money (very important) they need employees, they need accountants, lawyers, website designers, social media management, production assistants and the list goes on and on. But all these would be useless if there’s no structure. This is something I still struggle with - trying to do all or most of the work myself. There is no blueprint as to how to run a successful business so in most situations it’s by trial and error. Structure and finding what others have done in similar businesses have done is important, so that you can manage these other aspects that are essential to the running of your business effectively. The entrepreneur can then focus on the core of the business; which is where their genius lies.

FOG: Where do you see Essie Spice in the next 5-10 years?

EB: Expanding. This year we will be expanding our product line to include auxiliary products that work around food. Also by year end, we plan to expand into some snacks. We also want to expand into the West-African and South African Markets so we are working on securing production locations so we can make this happen as it’s futile trying to export the products from the US to Ghana or Africa.

FOG: What is your message of advice to all aspiring young Ghanaians?

EB: In business, just like in life, there is no magic wand. The man on top of the mountain didn’t fall there. Either he made his way up there or someone helped him to get there. So find the people around you that can help you get to the top of the mountain and anything else that will try to bring you down, cut off or ignore. Work hard, persevere, have faith and remember don’t start if you know you’ll give up; because it doesn’t get easier, you just get better.

FOG: How important are initiatives such as Dine Diaspora (who are featured in the publication) to those in the culinary industry?

EB: Very important. We need to tell our own stories if no one is telling them for us. Dine Diaspora is creating a space for African voices through food. We need more ventures and outlets for creative Africans; not just for the doctors, engineers and politicians but for the creative’s as well.

FOG: What are your favourite Ghanaian foods and why?

EB: EVERYTHING! There’s nothing I won’t eat; with very few exceptions. But I’m not a picky eater so that should tell you something about my palate. But my ultimate favourite is Abom with Koobi and Plantain with Zomi, eggs and Avocado... It’s heaven in each morsel.

FOG: In what ways do you believe the youth can contribute and be a part of the development of Ghana?

EB: The youth today are more connected than we’ve ever been. This is our advantage to network, come together and harness that energy, that drive and that power of connectivity. Together we really have a strong voice. We can influence government, we can impact the environment and we can affect the economy. We are all we have; but we can’t do it alone. We need to do it together, be each other’s backbone.

"There is no blueprint as to how to run a successful business so in most situations it’s by trial and error"
Clara currently presents the popular mid-morning show on BBC Radio 1. Prior to this in 2011, Amfo travelled to Ghana to make a film in support of the charity Plan’s ‘Because I Am A Girl’ campaign. Amfo hosted the British premiere of Red Riding Hood and has reported from assorted events in the UK including Wireless, Global Gathering, SW4 and NASS festivals. In 2012 she was nominated for a Sony Radio Award in the ‘Rising Star’ category.

In 2015, Amfo became the host of The Official Chart on BBC Radio 1. February 2015 saw the announcement that she would be taking over Fearne Cotton as host of Radio 1’s mid-morning show - home of the Live Lounge - on 25 May 2015, and therefore be departing from 1Xtra’s weekend breakfast show.

She has done voice overs for Motorola, Nike and Spotify. In September 2013 she joined BBC Radio 1Xtra as host of the weekend breakfast show. In 2013, Amfo was hired as the host of MTV’s weekly Official UK Top 40 and Top 20 Chart shows, as well as The Official Chart Update and Top 20.
David Simons is a Social Media strategist/Trainer and creator of an internationally recognized Facebook course. He completed his undergrad in Digital Media Communications from Sacramento State University and his Masters in Entertainment Business from Full Sail University.

As an entrepreneur and media professional David has shown he is great communicator and motivator, who uses his people skills online and offline to promote brands, businesses, support causes, and build relationships. His passion and excitement for media has attracted the likes of Fortune 500 companies, non-profits, churches, and entrepreneurs.

He has received a number of Awards and recognition including being voted one of the “5 to Follow on Twitter” for the reuse brand Upcycling in 2011.

In 2012 he was highlighted by Dell regarding his social media strategy. In 2014 Hootsuite highlighted him for his work on the engagement and growth of social networks.

He is also the author of the popular eBook, “The Ultimate Social Media Tool Kit”

David's goal is use all his skills to create change in Africa. As a Ghanaian-American he has a heart to impact his homeland first and would love to see Ghana dominate in the tech and media realm.
Samuel Okyere is a Ghanaian television personality active in South Korea. He was accepted into the Korean Government Scholarship Program in 2009. This is a program that helps foreign students study in Korea. He studied computer engineering and graduated in 2014. He was meant to go home after 5 years but has now been there for seven and has increasingly become more fascinated with the Korean culture. In that time he has learned the language, starred in and presented a number of popular television shows. In 2015 Okyere was casted for the film “Intimate Enemies” where he played a migrant worker from Africa who struggled with racial discrimination. Okyere was drawn to the role because he wanted to illustrate the kind of discrimination that immigrants face. He is also a member of a television program called abnormal summit. This is a show which presents a platform for various foreigners to compare their culture with Korean culture.

He also partnered with World Vision to embark on a school project in Ghana called the 572 Orange act project (572 is his name in Korean). This project is a result of his vision to provide children in Ghana with quality educational opportunities. In 2015, during the 8th Korea drama awards, he received the Global Star Award for his performance in the drama “Warm and Cozy”.

Samuel also received a plaque for spearheading the 2015 Black history event in Daegu, South Korea. His most recent achievement is a 3 star honorary and appreciation plaque from the Republic of Korea Marine Corps for his participation in the television “Real Men”. He is an avid member as well as one of the pioneers of the Ghanaian students association in Korea. Sam Okyere believes in the importance of the youth creating their own opportunities and using that to give back to their communities. Hence his greatest desire is to obtain a platform for bridging cultures mainly between Korea and Ghana.
Bright Oduro-Kwateng Jr is an Inspirational Speaker/Personal Development & Confidence Coach, a PRINCE 2 Qualified Project Manager and has a track record of previously managing clinical trials with the responsibility of managing budgets in excess of $1 million.

He graduated from University with a degree Biomedical Sciences in 2009 where soon after he worked in the NHS for 3 months. Deciding that the lab wasn’t for him, he wanted to find a way where he could use his strengths (presentation skills, communication skills, problem solving skills etc) in a more effective way. Later in 2009, he joined an organisation called Richmond Pharmacology (a Phase 1 Clinical trial unit) and joined their graduate program there. He excelled in this program and very quickly outgrew the role so he thought he should change directions further and step into the world of project management in the context of still staying within the pharmaceutical industry.

In October 2010, Bright was able to secure a role in a leading central laboratory where they had a large PM group where he joined. Being the youngest in the company, as hard a worker he was, he couldn’t see himself progressing through.

However, to his surprise, after the first year, he was promoted and then 18 months later he was promoted again to a Global Project Manager who dealt with large accounts leading clinical trials. This was a huge achievement as accelerated career growth was not common in the company yet alone in the marketplace full stop.

His salary doubled in the space of this time and of course due to this success, he had the luxury of flying to Ghana more frequently where his passion for Ghana grew further. He decided to open his own limited company where he offers his PM services to the top 20 pharma companies globally.

Since April 2014, Bright has worked as a contractor securing contracts in the field of project management in clinical trials. So far, he is on his 2nd contract working for a top 20 pharma company on a new exciting drug yet to hit the market.

Alongside this he does his motivational speaking which he intends to take pursue full time in the future. Project Management in clinical trials is what he likes, but motivating/inspiring people is what he loves. That’s his purpose!
Paul-Miki Akpablie is the founder of Kadi Energy Company. He is also a Mathematics and Biochemistry Major at Colorado College. He is passionate about leveraging economic power to improve people's lives. He developed Kadi, a sustainable business model, for the purpose of improving the lives of Ghana's rural poor by providing environmentally friendly products while simultaneously delivering significant returns to investors.

At the age of fifteen and living in Ghana, he developed a solar collector that was used to power community centre lights. While at United World College in Hong Kong, Paul co-founded The Graduate Program, a profitable student-run tutoring business of which he is still a major shareholder. He attended many energy summits and is an advocate for provision of financially sustainable renewable energy to change the lives of Ghanaians in the short-term and all Africans in the long-term.

Akpablie, has spent years developing a mobile phone charger that uses battery and solar energy to charge phones and other digital devices. Through his company he aims to bring innovative energy solutions and empower social change in Africa.

Ghana has an estimated 16 million mobile phone users, but more than 40 percent have no electricity to charge their phones and debilitating blackouts can last for weeks. Charging stations are available, but can be time-consuming and expensive thus Kadi energy aims to fill that void.

The company have now expanded beyond just phone charging and are in the process of developing a 10MW solar plant in Ghana to some support to the current energy infrastructure. They are currently in talks with GRIDCO about the procurement process.

In 2015 Paul-Miki was was recognised internationally for his work by receiving the Queen's Young Leaders Award. The Queen's Young Leader Award recognises and celebrates exceptional people aged 18-29 from across the Commonwealth, who are taking the lead in their communities and using their skills to transform lives. Winners of this prestigious Award receive a unique package of training, mentoring and networking, including a one-week residential programme in the UK during which they will collect their Award from Her Majesty The Queen.
Wendy Atswei Laryea is an award winning broadcast journalist/news anchor and producer at TV3 Network Limited. With over seven years of experience in journalism, Wendy believes Journalism is her tool for social change. Her passion for social issues, especially health, education and human interest issues is always evident in her incisive news reports.

One such report on the state of a dilapidated school building, Oborpah M/A Primary School in the Eastern region, led to the construction of a six-unit classroom block and K.V.I.P by a real estate company for the school.

In 2014, her expose on the ordeal of kindergarten pupils of the Atampiisi primary school and the Tongo Beo primary school all in the Upper East Region of Ghana, who wrote on the bare floor due to inadequate writing material like slates touched the heart of philanthropists to donate learning materials to the school.

Her hard work on and off-air was recognized at the 2015 Ghana Journalists Association Awards held in Accra where she picked two awards on the same night for “Best Report News (Radio and TV) and Digital Journalism Category, and Best Report on Education (Electronic)”

Wendy, the Producer of “Business Focus” an award winning business program on TV3, has also covered major events including the 7th African Conference on Sexual Health & Rights held this year, the 2008 Elections and the 2007 African Union Summit held in Accra.

Aside from journalism, Wendy is also the Programmes Manager for Princess Sekyere Mission (www.psmmission.org), an NGO which focuses on the youth, women, health and environment. She engages the youth in mentoring activities. PSM has organized over five mentoring seminars for over 10, 000 Junior High School (JHS) students in Ghana.

She was among one hundred participants of the President Obama’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) West Africa Pioneering Cohort, 2015.

Her job as an anchor has seen her interview influential personalities, including the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner - Liberian Women’s Rights campaigner Leymah Gbowee and Ghana’s former President John Agyekum Kufuor.

The Reuters trained broadcaster aspires to be an international media practitioner, and a communications expert.
Africa's Next Agribusiness Frontiers

by David Asare Asiamah
History has shown that within a half-a-generation, continents can drastically improve agricultural production and make themselves food sufficient. We have seen this in Asia and Eastern Europe where the ‘Green Revolution’ turned around their food security stories and made them net exporters of food. But will this story ever happen in Africa? Agriculture has remained a largely neglected sector by stakeholders, particularly governments. Although the 2003 Maputo Declaration of Food Security and Agriculture committed all 53 African countries to investing at least 10 percent of their respective national budgets for policy implementation relating to agriculture and rural development, only about 13 countries have so far met that. The sad part is that the continent continues to rely heavily on imported food, spending more than 50 billion US dollars on that annually, despite the vast available opportunities for local production.

The Famous Green Revolution

Promoters of the late 1950’s Green Revolution called it an approach to combat world’s hunger. They assembled international scientific research and the widespread dissemination of improved plant varieties in developing countries. Beginning in Mexico, the Philippines and India, the new varieties of wheat, rice and maize swiftly spread through the tropics to replace farmers’ varieties. But these varieties only produced the desired ‘high yielding’ results subject to irrigation, mechanisation, and plenty of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. The outcome of this work was rise in yields for specific crops and in specific countries.

Corollary to the success of the green revolution in Asia, Africa’s green revolution was birthed to replicate Asia’s success based on the promotion of new seeds, fertilisers, improved irrigation and infrastructure but it failed due to basic economic challenges and was worsened by unavailable credit and insurance markets, and high illiteracy which held back extension efforts. Related high transport costs, inadequate institutional support, poor infrastructure, unstable political regimes, weak institutional and social design dimensions diverse agro-ecological complexities, low fertilizer usage and the unavailability of the right high-yielding varieties, made agricultural productivity low (World Bank 2007).

Corollary to the success of the green revolution in Asia, Africa’s green revolution was birthed to replicate Asia’s success based on the promotion of new seeds, fertilisers, improved irrigation and infrastructure but it failed due to basic economic challenges and was worsened by unavailable credit and insurance markets, and high illiteracy which held back extension efforts. Related high transport costs, inadequate institutional support, poor infrastructure, unstable political regimes, weak institutional and social design dimensions diverse agro-ecological complexities, low fertilizer usage and the unavailability of the right high-yielding varieties, made agricultural productivity low (World Bank 2007).

Even in primitive time’s population growth often must have endangered or exceeded man’s ability to make his agriculture productive. In Pharaoh’s dreams and Joseph’s interpretation of forthcoming famine and his planning for it, as specified by this citation from Genesis: "...And the seven years of shortage began to come, conferring as Joseph had said: and the shortage was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread..." For his time, Joseph was sensible, with the support of his God. But currently we ought to be far cleverer; with the support of our Gods and our science with technology. The technology needed to advance today’s agriculture is present; from building supply and value chain solutions to integrating agricultural outputs of rural farmers in emerging markets to linking farmers to markets, finance, weather forecast, new farming tips, inputs dealers, business tools and equipment services.

**Africa’s green revolution was birthed to replicate Asia’s success based on the promotion of new seeds**

---

The Famous Green Revolution

Promoters of the late 1950’s Green Revolution called it an approach to combat world’s hunger. They assembled international scientific research and the widespread dissemination of improved plant varieties in developing countries. Beginning in Mexico, the Philippines and India, the new varieties of wheat, rice and maize swiftly spread through the tropics to replace farmers’ varieties. But these varieties only produced the desired ‘high yielding’ results subject to irrigation, mechanisation, and plenty of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. The outcome of this work was rise in yields for specific crops and in specific countries.

Corollary to the success of the green revolution in Asia, Africa’s green revolution was birthed to replicate Asia’s success based on the promotion of new seeds, fertilisers, improved irrigation and infrastructure but it failed due to basic economic challenges and was worsened by unavailable credit and insurance markets, and high illiteracy which held back extension efforts. Related high transport costs, inadequate institutional support, poor infrastructure, unstable political regimes, weak institutional and social design dimensions diverse agro-ecological complexities, low fertilizer usage and the unavailability of the right high-yielding varieties, made agricultural productivity low (World Bank 2007).

Africa’s green revolution was birthed to replicate Asia’s success based on the promotion of new seeds.
Today’s youth remain the hope to advance this. But there is an image disconnect in much of Africa which is much pervasive amongst young people and has made it detrimental to the sustainability of the sector. The relationship between young people and their interest in the agricultural sector, whether to be attributed to failing economies, the low productivity and income output in the sector, inadequate labour and capital for input investment, coupled with an unattractive rural environment, could be due to the evolving ambitions and desires of both young people and their predecessors - an agrarian transition. As such, it is not shocking that a myriad range of varied wits have focused on making agriculture prominent.

Numerous efforts by stakeholders to encourage the teeming unemployed youth to pursue professions in agriculture have not made much difference because policy promoters, policymakers and development planners depend too much on ‘common knowledge’, and narratives to improve and reason policy alternatives. This possibly could be good politics, but it has produced vain development results, principally when the glitches being addressed are associated with complex phenomena such as poverty, livelihoods, agrarian shifts, social justice and sustainability but a more holistic approach like that of Agro Mindset is needed.

As a mission-driven firm specializing in agribusiness ventures, Agro Mindset is working to change attitudes and break stereotypes, and has begun operations in Ghana. Our focus is to run highly profitable farm-based enterprises with long term growth potential and showcase this know how to young aspiring farmers in an industry relevant manner. We strive to be on the cutting edge of innovation and create new industry standards across the spectrum and we are committed to developing Africa’s agribusiness ecosystem.

We as well lead the development of outreach programmes in thematic areas of agriculture, agribusiness, and entrepreneurship for sections of Ghanian youth and tertiary education students. Our farm which remains our production component, models how the youth and the private sector engage in agriculture. Our Logistics service assists young and new farmers with market links and investment opportunities. The combined contribution of these products in the medium to the long term would significantly raise the profile of agriculture in Africa, underpinned by a strong and active participation of the youth.

Agro Mindset is working to change attitudes and break stereotypes, and has begun operations in Ghana.

As a mission-driven firm specializing in agribusiness ventures, Agro Mindset is working to change attitudes and break stereotypes, and has begun
Today’s youth are tomorrow’s family farmers and the future of agriculture depends on the youth of today for succession, enthusiasm, fresh ideas and innovation. But the success of all strategies and interventions to involve the youth largely depends on the willingness of the new generation of literates and interested youth to take up agriculture as a potentially rewarding livelihood, focusing on agro-specific solutions that fashion agriculture as a sector with prospects. Stakeholders should address credit constraints, for instance by the giving soft loans to youth who form interdisciplinary peer groups. This will remove the credit bottleneck and also enhance interdisciplinary cohesion.

Challenges and solution modeling

Building a start-up in Ghana is very challenging. Initially no one believes in you. Financing our Farms division came with a whole package of obstacles. After the beginning phase of launching, a few systematic challenges we faced with running our business and operations included the constant depreciation of the value of Ghana’s Cedi. This meant we couldn’t purchase much needed inputs at the market. Rather than stopping at this problem, we mitigated this barrier to entry and operation by creating another subsidiary, Agro Mindset Logistics to assist our operation and other young farmers who are all new farm entrants to have effective links to market; although we operate on lower scale. We sold over 4 million eggs in the last year alone. This is a testament of a working model, and a compelling success story of the youth’s engagement in agriculture. Rather than lip servicing the issues like many frustrated with the challenges, we focused with laser precision on possible solutions and implements.

At the moment, we are investing time, resource and energy to develop 3 new divisions:

- Logistics-focused on market facilitation via input procurement, supply distribution modelling and license/franchise opportunities.
- Academy-focused on bringing the farm to your technology platforms at anytime, anywhere to learn anything.
- Fellowship-focused on developing a network of entrepreneurs and others with a demonstrated interest in creating a new chapter for agriculture through action.

How has your business distinguished itself from its competitors?

Agro Mindset is an emerging player in the Ghana-based agribusiness space. There are weak agricultural and food training systems with fallen standards in Ghana’s agricultural curriculum. For years, our educational establishments train youth for urban based bureaucracies. Our educator curriculum is engaged with urgent rural development issues seen from an entrepreneurial perspective. Having walked the path, our practical story is of enhancing youth engagement in agriculture. Our ‘Farmacy’ tool, our agricultural and educational incubator, identifies and trains youth with support. For new farmers and existing smallholders’ who have incomplete, ineffective and inequitable market access, our network links farmers to reduce cost of operations and enhance productivity.

Unlike individual farmers that provide weaker market power, we provide a stronger and more equitable network. This is improving youth readiness for industry. Youth enrolled on our venture live and have field work at the grassroots level with rural farmers.

This provides them with skill acquisition and capacity building via vocational training within an active participatory learning environment. This process fosters entrepreneurship and innovation. Youth are empowered to tackle food insecurity as they understand the basic sciences and how they affect food.

How has your business distinguished itself from its competitors?

Agro Mindset is an emerging player in the Ghana-based agribusiness space. There are weak agricultural and food training systems with fallen standards in Ghana’s agricultural curriculum. For years, our educational establishments train youth for urban based bureaucracies. Our educator curriculum is engaged with urgent rural development issues seen from an entrepreneurial perspective. Having walked the path, our practical story is of
Farm-to-table is where the opportunity and excitement is.
Gradually, instead of the traditional buyer-seller relationship of ad hoc transactions all the way along the procurement supply-chain of needed farming inputs, Agro Mindset is building relationships through which the farmer produces to the buyer’s specifications. Not only do such relationships facilitate the movement of products to consumers, but they also facilitate continual improvements in the chain, something that is impossible with ad hoc transactions.

We see tremendous private sector opportunities in the Ghana based agriculture sector throughout the food system industry to develop profitable solutions to costly problems, including trade finance, commodities exchange, futures market, banking instruments as well as prospects further down the chain for distribution and retail. The linkage between production and consumption.... farm-to-table is where the opportunity and excitement is. It will require and create space for education, policy, equity investment, commodities market, futures market, innovation farmer friendly financial instruments, social and physical infrastructure, revolving lines of credit, venture capital, truck, bulk storage, sound retail, improved business practices, communication, big data, and the list is infinite. This continent will dance to a new rhythm. Not because someone keeps trying to teach a new dance. But because one or two people dance to their own rhythm and eventually their music will be the beat that people dance to.

Youth is an asset. Young people - the shapers of the future are an asset to society. The success of all strategies and interventions to secure the youth largely depends on the willingness of the new generation of literate and interested youth to take up agriculture as a potentially rewarding livelihood, focusing on agro-specific solutions that fashion agriculture as a sector with prospects to be dynamic, intellectually agile, and pragmatic. The future of agriculture which we all owe our lives to for food, fuel and fibre relies on the younger generation coming through to provide succession, add enthusiasm, bring fresh ideas and drive innovation.

Without a clear policy strategy for engaging this rising group of youth, leaders and the development partners that work with them risk creating an economic time bomb for their successors. But more importantly if policymakers fail to find finance for and include youth in policy and development planning processes, our development legacy in much of Africa will be a missed opportunity to transform the lives of this and the next generation.

David Asare Asiamah is the Founder of the Agro Mindset Group who's focus is to run highly profitable farm-based enterprises with long term growth potential and showcase this know how to young aspiring farmers in an industry relevant manner.
A year in the Life of Farmerline

Compiled by Alloysius Attah, CEO Farmerline
A year on, and Farmerline has grown independently and through a vast array of new partnerships with various international and local organizations. With these partnerships, they have initiated projects that will help to serve Farmerline’s aims; using web platforms and mobile applications to disseminate and collect agricultural data to/from smallholder farmers.

One of the many partnerships Farmerline entered into over the past year was one with Welthungerhilfe (WHH) in April 2015, which became effective on March 30th. This agreement centered on the development and implementation of a computerized TMS for the collection of “Farmer Data” and Farm/Field Data, the mapping of cocoa and coffee fields, the communication with farmers and the tracing of cocoa and coffee products.

Additionally, Farmerline set-up Project TAHMO. This will initiate a platform that will provide weather data and harvest tracking. Within this project Farmerline also created an app to improve information access and communication channels for smallholder cocoa farmers.

Moreover, to provide innovative mobile-based agricultural information and messaging services to Eighty (80) communities Farmerline further collaborated with Trias Ghana a Belgium-based NGO. This reputable NGO is currently working with in 14 different countries worldwide to improve the livelihood security of small-scale entrepreneurs, small-scale farmers and their organizations by working through their member based organizations.

What’s more, Farmerline was privileged to partner with ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA) in building the capacity of actual and potential end users of its m-apps.

CTA particularly selected Farmerline as a value added service provider for the hosting of twenty (20) m-apps training workshops, across selected regions in Ghana, highlighting the eminent reputation Farmerline has established for itself. Through these workshops Farmerline trained and provided hands-on experience to at least a total of 500 users and potential users of their innovative m-apps and agricultural information services.

Besides this, the need to explore new and modern ways of collecting agricultural and market price data led to the piloting of a Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) system by SRID in partnership with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in some selected districts in Ghana.

Not only has the company’s staff almost doubled in size, but they have successfully established its headquarters in Accra.
With support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Feed the Future (FtF) and Ghana Agricultural Policy Support Project (APSP), an improved CAPI was developed and extended to cover all the 216 districts in the country.

Furthermore, Farmerline has conducted farmer workshops for 1,683 smallholder farmers and 121 Agric extension Officers within Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Here they have been able to train farmers to use Farmerline’s MERGDATA application and general good agricultural practices.

Not only has the company’s staff almost doubled in size, but they have successfully established its headquarters in Accra. Today the team is pleased to say it has an administrative branch and host of the business development team which helps facilitate their operations.

2015 was evidently a year of great success for Frontline highlighted by the awards they have received. Such awards include, Unilever Sustainable Young Achievers Award, Financial Times Award and Oxford Africa Conference StartUp Award. These alone are testament to the organisations pioneering progress.

Farmerline and in particular their CEO Alloysius Attah have been incredibly active this past year speaking at the Global Entrepreneurship Summit, pitching at Palace Africa and attending the likes of Oxford Africa Conference, ICT4D Conference in Singapore, GIZ Conference in Germany and AFRINIC Conferences in Tunis, Congo.

Another remarkable achievement is that Farmerline has expanded its supply chain. Now Sierra Leone, Malawi, Cameroon and Nigeria as well as Ghana are now currently benefiting from Farmerline services.

Farmerline are actively chancing the perception of farming in rural Ghana and beyond, contributing to the increase in yield and value of agricultural products in Ghana and other parts of Africa.

The company anticipates that in the future they will be able to facilitate the transmission of validated weather forecast information to farmers. At the moment, they hope to provide reliable financial services to farmers. This will be achieved through potential strategic partnerships with mobile money services and/or emergency loans and basic banking features for Micro Finance institutions.

Edited by Lois Mensah-Afoakwah
Limited Edition Men’s and Women’s Belts designed in London with 100% Genuine Leather on all items. Sykes & Woodrow combine modern fashion with both British and African visions to produce uniquely crafted collections.

www.sykeswoodrow.com
From a young age Sinead has proactively sought ways to help others; social inclusion and citizenship have been her passions. Such passions were birthed when she was selected for the UK’s Prime Minister’s Global Fellowship Programme, where she investigated issues of culture, language, education and global enterprise.

Her passion to inspire her peers led her to establish a Young Enterprise publishing company called InspirANation, which focused on tackling social issues like political apathy amongst her peers and a perceived lack of role models for ethnic children growing up. The first book, called ‘Why Vote?’ focused on the former, were she interviewed almost 400 MPs on the importance of political participation, before selling copies of the book through Amazon, WHSmith, independent bookstores and catalogued at the British Library – David Cameron, Nick Clegg and Gordon Brown each purchased a book as a token of support.


Wanting to further develop her business acumen and personal development she applied for The Source 2011 competition styled on the BBC’s reality TV show ‘The Apprentice’. Overcoming stiff competition over the course of 18 months, she won the coveted first prize of £10,000 and one on one mentoring from successful entrepreneur ‘MKOGS’.

As an Account Manager at Google Dublin, Sinead manages the global/EMEA activity for the multi-million dollar brand. She seeks to develop companies into powerful brands in a more creative and measurable way. As a result of her role Sinead was selected to be the head judge for Google’s Top Black Talent Program aimed at empowering ethnic students with the knowledge to pass the rigorous and competitive job interviews.

She has also recently founded a shapewear business in Dublin called BodyFleek which specialises in all things body enhancing, giving individuals the platform to feel and look good in anything that they wear. By providing this service she has built a great rapport with members from the LGBT community and is exploring ways that she can cater to their needs also.

Meet a Pioneer

Sinead Rose

24 years old, Ireland
Dziffa Akua is an entrepreneur who is very passionate about the role small businesses play in the economic development of Sub-Saharan African countries and works extensively to make sure these businesses succeed. She holds a bachelor’s degree in economics and political science from Herbert H. Lehman College (City University of New York, Magna Cum Laude). She’s a fellow of The Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program, The American Economic Association Training for Minorities in Economics, and Yale Global Pre-MBA program.

Dziffa moved back to Ghana to help transform the country’s economy from import dependence to a production driven economy. Dziffa has always dreamt of an Africa that played a significant role in the global market as distributors of high quality finished goods, not just suppliers of raw materials. She moved to Ghana after 10 years of living in New York to make that dream a reality.

Within months of being in Ghana she discovered a plethora of talented manufacturers who not only turn raw materials into finished goods but also have the potential to decrease unemployment if local and global demand of their goods increased.

Dziffa founded Dziffa.com, an eCommerce website that connects local and international customers seeking authentic products from Ghana to manufacturers in Ghana in January 2015. Today Dziffa.com has eight manufacturing partners in Ghana and over 90 products from broad categories. She hopes that Africans on the continent, Africans in the Diaspora and African Americans will actively purchase from small businesses in Africa so their ventures can grow and enable them to contribute to the economic development of their economies.

Dziffa believes that many of the economic challenges in Africa can be solved if the hardworking entrepreneurs on the ground received the support they needed for their ventures to grow. It is Dziffa’s dream to live in an Africa that is free of economic dependence, an Africa that produces, innovates, and contributes to the advancement of the world.
Kwadwo Sarpong is the co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of African Research Academies for Women. He is a current PREP Scholar at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and hopes to one day become a physician scientist specializing in neurosurgery due to his own battle with severe form of typhoid fever as a kid and his brother’s paralytic polio condition. He is currently evaluating the role of somatic mutations in children with autism and White House invited Sarpong to the US-Africa Leaders’ Summit to discuss ways President Obama’s administration could invest in women education and empowerment in Africa.

Kwadwo graduated from Emory University last year as the Class Marshall and the recipient of the Patricia Taylor Award for Academic Excellence. Kwadwo Sarpong has been recognized by Emory University for Global Philanthropy, The Commonwealth Secretariat, United States Embassy in Ghana, Planet Earth Institute, and interviewed by The L’Oréal Foundation Discover Her magazine for his leadership and work with ARA-W. After graduation, Kwadwo was the only student selected by Emory University to be interviewed by NPR (WABE 90.1 FM) in Atlanta, commending him for his perseverance and leading such a worthy cause.

Currently at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Sarpong together with his team won the Mount Sinai Young Innovator Pitch Challenge at this year’s Mount Sinai Innovations. He currently serves on the Board for Sankofa Generation of Africa, 21st Century Citizens Initiative and heads partnership and strategic initiatives for Shepherd Mills – an initiative that uses advanced agricultural research techniques to equip rural rice farmers with tools for increased productivity, incomes and improved livelihoods.

Kwadwo was recently selected as a Highly Recommended Runner Up for The Queen’s Young Leaders Award and will be taking a one-year leadership course with the University of Cambridge as part of the award package. Sarpong will also be speaking at the Next Einstein Forum Global Gathering, an initiative under the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) in March hosted by the President of Senegal, H.E. President Macky Sall on the topic, “Driving the Agenda for African Women in STEM”
Meet a Pioneer

Ama Wusuwaah

28 years old, Belgium

Constance Owusu-waah who prefers to be called ‘Wusuwaah’ is an African fashion designer / stylist who was born in Ghana but is currently residing in Belgium.

After studying art & graphics at Saint-Lucas College she trained at the fashion design department at Syntra of Brussels Uccle where she ended her European studies. She then furthered her studies with a fashion practical homeschooling course in Ghana. Wusuwaah started with fashion at a young age she had always liked recycling different materials she comes across to produce different designs with shades of colours and forms. Through her part-time modelling and internship at Photo Studio Delro in 2008, she gained a lot of training in the modelling industry and learnt how to take big responsibilities at both amateur and professional level.

Her love for fashion kept growing bigger that she wanted to make it her priority.

She took the right courses to build on her talent and skills. In 2010 she applied for internship at Pierre Antonio Vettorello Brussels which led to her being featured at the Arise Made in Africa at New York Fashion week 2011 with the renowned Pierre Antonio Vettorello’s styling and fashion designing team.

Wusuwaah got the chance to learn more about the fashion world, gained more experience and boosted her confidence which was needed to help her face the reality of fashion as well as the many obstacles she may encounter on her journey. Wusuwaah dreams to have her own fashion-school in Ghana soon where she herself can share her knowledge with others. Her ups and downs through life so far have been key to her motivation. Her experiences as a stylist, a fashion designer, well-known daring personality have been a source of inspiration to others.

Though not doing too badly as she has been a featured at a number of shows such as LACE (London Africa Culture Event) Fashion Show 2015’, Black History Month 2015’ Antwerp Fashion Festival 2015 Belgium Bal der Bals Fashion Show 2015 (Lebbeke) Belgium and the My Runway Fashion Show Coventry 2013.
Sadiq is a young Ghanaian media and entertainment powerhouse having worked in the Ghanaian and Africa media/entertainment scene for the past 11 years, where he worked for notable brands as Metro TV, Multimedia Broadcasting Limited owners of Joy FM, myjoyonline.com, and Adom Fm.

Until March 2015, Sadiq was the Head of Own Productions & Executive Producer at Modern Times Group (MTG)owned television channel, Viasat1 where he led a team to create exciting new content and reposition old ones that enhance channel ratings and earned the channel a total of 14 awards during his a year and half stay with the channel. Some of the awards include multiple Television Awards Ghana & Radio & Television (RTP) Awards.

In July 2015, Sadiq partnered with long time friend and mentor, Ruddy Kwakye to co-founded an emerging media and entertainment powerhouse, MUSE MEDIA NETWORKS, the parent company of MUSE a multi-platform media brand targeting young African millennials with it’s mostly, urban music, entertainment culture, lifestyle & sports content across all its touch points.

He is currently the company’s CEO, where he is leading efforts to grow MUSE into a strong Pan-African media and entertainment brand within two years, to this end; they have signed partnerships with terrestrial TV partners in key markets including Ghana, Tanzania and Ivory Coast.

In 2016, he also intends to lead the brand to organise a number of social impact campaigns and activities targeted at getting a lot of young people to vote and the first Political Youth debate featuring the various political parties in Ghana.

Aside from this, Sadiq finds time to touch base, speak at events & mentor young individuals some of whom are working for MUSE & particularly in New Fadama, a community in Okaikoi Central Constituency he grew up and where he regularly organises social events targeted at various causes including clean-ups, Speak-Ups with Kids etc . Every year as well, he invests in a carnival & a sports festival during Sallah celebrations that brings all the big name music and sports talents to his community. The carnival serves as a platform for traditional Chiefs & leaders to engage young people in the community whilst the sports festival also helps to unearth young talents in the community.
2016 Future of Ghana Youth Leadership Forum

FORUM THEME: Governance - Changing the levers of accountability
FORUM MISSION: To provide practical enterprise training, career support and a platform to generate new thinking, attitudes and approaches towards improving the state of Ghana and the African continent at large for next generation youth.

FORUM MISSION: 21st - 23rd July 2016
WHERE: Ashesi University, Accra, Ghana

REGISTER TO ATTEND TODAY:
Acknowledgments

The Future of Ghana team would like to thank and acknowledge the following individuals and organisations for services provided in support of the Future of Ghana initiative 2016;

Our Patron, the legendary Mr James Barnor for his insight, advice, good humour, unwavering support and assistance during judging process.

Our official Judges/Ambassadors, Emmanuel Edudzie, Lorraine Wright, Isaac Babu-Boateng, Ethel Cofie and Adrien Sauvage for their support, expertise during the judging process and endorsement throughout.

A special thank you to Ray Lewis, Senior Advisor to the Mayor for London for his support and coordination of the hugely successful Future of Ghana Forum 2016 at the Greater London Authority, City Hall on the 3rd March 2016