



Alumni News

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Alumni launch the i-Wallet

Only 5% of Ghana’s population have bank accounts. But what about the 95% of citizens who don’t?

Three Ashesi alumni—Claude Hutchful, Henry Sampson, and Charles Hanson-Quao —stepped up to this challenge and created an electronic banking system that will be easily usable by all citizens. They named their product the i-Wallet. The intelligent wallet.

The i-Wallet started as a senior thesis project. Not only did Claude, Henry and Charles believe they could create innovative new technology, they believed they could tailor it for Ghanaians so that anyone with a mobile phone could make purchases easily and quickly. Moreover, the system they designed was able to track fraudulent

transactions to ensure their customer’s accounts remain safe.

“We can see people paying for flights, hotels and tour packages using the i-Wallet. We can see students paying for an upcoming concert from the comfort of their school, home or workplace.”

The students’ thesis research proved that Ghana desired their product and after graduation, the three founding members (two Computer Science majors and one from Management Information Systems) committed themselves to becoming entrepreneurs.

Job offers from prestigious businesses tempted them, but they held on to their dream and, with business plan in hand, they have begun to raise money.

They may be constrained



i-wallet Co-Founder Charles Hanson-Quao

by experience, limited in capital but they are also realistic enough to brace themselves for the challenges of richer competitors.

The edge they have, however, is undeniable: energy, imagination, and the desire to make long-awaited change. Who knows how far this will carry them? ☞

Campus Profile: Dean Adzo Ashie

Before joining Ashesi University, Mrs. Ashie worked for the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy in Washington, DC and for Orphanage Africa. She earned a BA from Mount Holyoke College and a Master’s from

University of Massachusetts, Amherst. We asked Mrs. Ashie to reflect on the journey that brought her back to Ghana and on her attitude towards education.

“I believe strongly that education is the panacea

for Africa. Corruption, famine, war, child soldiers and despair have become synonymous with Africa. Africa needs hope, Africa needs change. Africa needs the right education. My decision to return to Ghana (Continued on p. 3)

Keep us posted!

We’re interested in what you’re up to....Send us news of your successes and challenges both on the job and off.

Write us at: alumni@ashesi.org

Good Reads from Nii

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom helped me to see what the important things in life are.

The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership by John C. Maxwell is very well written

Differentiate or Die by Trout and Rivkin is an absolute must for Business students

Getting Real by 37 Signals (www.37signals.com) offers a fantastic way to build web applications."



"Africans are responsible for Africa's development. We are graduates from Ashesi University poised to be the change we wish to see in Africa."

- Ashesi's i-Wallet entrepreneurs**

Alumni Notes

Perhaps nothing is more important than the communities we make together. After all, what truly is accomplished alone? Only together can we achieve our full potential. We at the Ashesi News want to help forge an Ashesi alumni community, link by link. And so we bring you....Alumni Notes. Every issue will feature your reflections on work, on challenges met, opportunities faced, and on life in general. We hope you will share your news and keep us all informed.

NII AMON DSANE

Nii Amon currently heads the software division of CoreNett (www.corenett.com), an EFT company. "It's not easy getting skilled software developers, he writes, "so I find that is my toughest challenge. Also in trying to grow into a world class entity, we have to overcome the stereotype that only India has top notch software aside from the established areas such as the US and Europe. It'll be tough but quality cannot be denied :). In this quest, I'm relying heavily on Ashesi for top notch talent. We've just recently taken on two interns from Ashesi and they are doing some interesting things."

While his position is exactly as Amon thought it would be, and although shared purpose makes it easy to interact

with others on the job, adjusting to living on one's own poses a challenge. Still it sounds as if Amon stays busy: he is interested in a charity called GICMF (Ghana Infant and Child Mortality Foundation) and reads quite a bit. See his recommendations in the side-bar.



MICHELLE EGHAN

If you've traveled in luxury you probably know Kingdom Hotel Investments the firm where Michelle works as Of-

fice Manager. KHI is an international hotel/resort development company located primarily in emerging markets.

Michelle's position is anything but routine! "I'm always doing something different," says Michelle. "Our office has four staff people and we all get along great...it's like another family. I'm still in Accra which makes things easier as I know the city and my family are close by. "

Although work keeps her busy Michelle hasn't forgotten about community work.

"I'm just not sure where to start but I would love to work with kids. " *✍*

First Female ASC President

Ms. **Yawa Osebreh** was elected the first female President of the Ashesi Student Council (ASC), and the first woman President of a university student government in Ghana. Born and raised in America, Yawa knew her family came from a place worth remembering but had only the vaguest notion "of this mystery called Africa." Ashesi provided her with answers she

says. Yawa has received awards for sportsmanship, club management, and has been on the Dean's list at Ashesi. She has also studied in Rome on scholarship.

"We at Ashesi are a community of men and women with a passion to change Africa... The knowledge that we are the creator of our

(Continued on p. 4)



Yawa Osebreh, Pres. ASC

News from Campus

Ashesi students **Daniel Adoudeh**, **Rachelle Philips**, **Sulemana Mohammed** and **Zubair Abubakar** were awarded fellowships to attend the first Technology, Entertainment, Design (TED) conference to be held in Africa. The four were on hand to hear Ashesi President, Patrick Awuah speak to the conference about the role education has to play in moving Africa

forward.

The TED conference is an invitation-only event where the world's leading thinkers and doers gather to find inspiration. All upcoming conferences through March 2008 are sold out.

Among the others to speak at the event were: Carol Pineau, George Ayithey (economist and author "African Unchained"), Yasour N'Dour, and Hector



Ashesi Founder, Patrick Awuah speaks at the TEDGlobal Conference in Tanzania. Watch his speech at: <http://www.ted.com/talks/view/id/156>

Ruiz (CEO of Advanced Micro Devices - AMD)

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Profile: Mrs. Adzo Ashie

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three years ago stemmed from my patriotism and my desire to change the trajectory of Ghana through education. A year after my return I made a wonderful discovery: Ashesi.

A liberal arts college in Ghana? An institution with values that I had lived and breathed for four years?

It was unbelievable.

Ashesi's values resonated with me. We believe we can change Africa one student at a time. Ashesi's rigorous academic program, leadership seminars, required community service and its team of dedicated staff and faculty have made Ashesi a leading private university creating waves of change. I knew, at Ashesi, my dreams and hopes could be realized. I could join a team of people with similar ideals. How could I

pass up such an offer?

The Pioneer Spirit

My education trained me to be successful and malleable. I started at Ashesi as an Associate Director of Career Placement and within a year ended up as a Dean of Student and Community Affairs. I have enjoyed every moment of working at Ashesi, a pioneer institution of a liberal arts education in Ghana and West Africa. I have always found myself in a pioneering role. My peers and I were the first to undertake the International Baccalaureate diploma in Ghana. I was the first student in my institution to attend Mount Holyoke College. Now, I am part of a group of pioneers spearheading the liberal arts culture in Ghana. When we succeed at Ashesi, young Ghanaians will

be more successful in the workplace. When they become leaders in institutions in Ghana, we will do better as a country.

Challenges and Victories

My greatest challenge at Ashesi has been working in a country where lack of infrastructure — such as reliable water and power supply— hinders the smooth operations of this institution.

My greatest joy has come from speaking with students whose fervent desire is to effect change in their communities. It's been wonderful encouraging students to understand and get on board the Ashesi mission for a better Ghana and Africa. I cannot see myself anywhere else. " 

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

- Nelson Mandela

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Yawa Osebreh

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own worlds is our guiding principle.”

Yawa’s achievement as the first female President of a student government group affirms her role as a trail-blazing student in Ghana. ☞

Campus News

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Zubair and Daniel have set up IT related businesses. Rachele is an aspiring international broadcaster determined to improve the lives of women in Ghana. Sulemana believes the pen is a powerful instrument to address Ghana’s political and socio-economic issues. He is an aspiring banker & politician.

For more about TED see its website: www.ted.com.

Ashesi is the first pri-

vate university in Ghana to receive a Fulbright Senior Specialist grant from the United States Government.

The award supports the work of Prof. Richard Douglass (Eastern Michigan University) in studying Ghana’s health sector and evaluating the possibility of establishing a health management curriculum at Ashesi.

Computer Science students at Ashesi partnered with University of

California, Berkeley to conduct air quality studies around Accra. Organized by a Ph.D. candidate and Intel Research, it will build a large scale, scientific instrument to characterize society’s relationship to its environment.

For student, Samuel Boateng Asumadu, participation in the project changed his awareness of pollution in Accra. “After witnessing the concentration of carbon monoxide recorded by my equipment, I began to take pollution more seriously.” ☞