



ASHESI

ASHESI UNIVERSITY & FOUNDATION

2022 Strategic Priorities

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Introduction

Ashesi University is a private, secular, not-for-profit university in Ghana. Established in 2002, Ashesi's mission is to educate ethical, entrepreneurial leaders in Africa; to cultivate the critical thinking skills, the concern for others and the courage it will take to transform a continent. Ashesi combines a rigorous liberal arts core with degree programs in Computer Science, Business Administration, Management Information Systems, and Engineering. A student-led honor code, integrated community service, diverse internships, and real-world projects prepare students to develop innovative solutions for the challenges facing their individual communities, countries and the continent at large.

Impact and Recognition

After 20 years, Ashesi is now recognized as one of the finest universities in Africa, with a proven track record in fostering ethical leadership, critical thinking, an entrepreneurial mindset, and the ability to solve complex problems. Ashesi graduates have been recruited across Africa by companies such as General Electric, Amazon, Airtel, Tigo, Nestle and Unilever. Every year, over 90% of Ashesi graduates are placed in jobs or graduate programs, or start their own businesses, within six months of graduation – and over 70% of them work in Africa.

Notable Ashesi alums include Regina Honu '05, who left her corporate career as an IT professional at a bank to found [Soronko Solutions](#), a software company focused on producing software solutions to support local SMEs. Through Soronko Solutions, Regina supports [Tech Needs Girls](#), a social enterprise she founded to help to teach girls in underserved communities how to code. Regina's work is transforming the future for girls in Ghana, and has earned her recognition as a [YALI fellow](#), [Aspen New Voices fellow](#) and [VLISCO Ambassador](#) of the year.

Kpetermeni Siakor '15 exemplifies the impact of Ashesi alumni far beyond the country of Ghana. A native of Liberia, Kpetermeni joined forces with Google during his sophomore year at Ashesi, helping to deploy a tool that allowed students in Monrovia access to open learning material with no internet access. In 2014, as Ebola spread across Liberia, Kpetermeni reached out to colleagues back home looking for ways to help from Ghana. After learning that health workers were struggling to track and store data on Ebola cases, he built and helped deploy tools for the Liberian Ministry of Health that helped medical experts become more efficient at dealing with Ebola. The solution was timely and helped speed up Liberia's progress towards becoming Ebola-free. Kpetermeni is now working as Director of Innovation at the tech hub he helped establish, iLab Liberia. For him, investing in higher education as a way of empowering Africans to solve their own problems is the best way forward in the long run. (See more profiles [here](#).)

With incredible alumni, demand from employers that surpasses current graduate numbers, and a growing student body, Ashesi provides a living example that higher education can transform individual lives, who in turn transform the communities around them. Ashesi and its founder, Patrick Awuah, have been recognized on a global scale for the school's role in preparing future

leaders to address the unique needs of the continent. Patrick is a MacArthur Fellow, and a winner of the WISE Prize for Education. In a 2012 survey of 300 CEOs conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ashesi University was ranked among the top ten most respected organizations in Ghana - a first for an education institution.

In 2018, Ashesi was awarded a Charter by the President of Ghana, freeing the university from supervision by a public university, under Ghana's accreditation rules. The Charter grants the university full independence as a nationally recognized degree-granting institution, the youngest private university to have been granted such recognition in Ghana's history to date.

In 2012, the Board of Trustees of Ashesi University Foundation and the Board of Directors of Ashesi University approved a \$93 million strategic plan to increase our impact entitled "Vision 2020." Approximately 50% of the target funding was allocated to scholarships, with the balance allocated to the expansion of academic programs and the university campus. Key goals for 2020 included:

1. Doubling the university's student population from 600 to 1,200 students
2. Expanding student recruiting across Africa, with a target of achieving 30% international enrollment
3. Establishing a high quality, gender-balanced engineering program
4. Boosting research, innovation and entrepreneurship, with a goal of achieving 20-25% of alumni starting new business within ten years of graduating from college
5. Expanding the university's scholarship program
6. Establishing the Ghana Climate Innovation Center as a business incubator to support entrepreneurs building products and services to mitigate climate change in Ghana
7. Expanding campus infrastructure to support new programs and enrich campus life

Ashesi raised \$78 million, including loans provided by the IFC, to accomplish these goals, and has made significant progress to date. The university successfully started three engineering majors; revamped curriculum to strengthen design thinking and entrepreneurship; and expanded the student body by approximately 67%. Over 10 buildings have been constructed to enhance academic work and residential life.

This growth happened while maintaining a strong scholarship program and a commitment to gender balance in Ashesi's programs. In our classrooms today:

- 48% of students are women
- 18% of students are international, with over 20 African countries represented
- 40% of engineering students are women
- 44% of students receive financial aid

Scholarships are provided by both the university and its philanthropic partners.

At Ashesi, we are driven by a faith in the ability of Africa's young people to shape the course of human history on the continent. We are driven by the knowledge that Africa's problems can be solved by inspired and enlightened Africans, if we give them the skills to do so. Ashesi is actively looking for strategic partners to join us in this work.

Current Priorities

These funding priorities can be best met by partnering with organizations across the development landscape, including local and international government agencies, private foundations and strategic partners who share a commitment to infusing the African continent with the leadership, entrepreneurship and educated populace needed to mobilize an African renaissance. Projects for consideration include the following:

Scholarships: *Named scholarships, emergency support, and endowment growth*

Scholarships are vital in allowing students from across the socioeconomic spectrum to access a world-class education. In the 2020-2021 school year, 42% of Ashesi students received need-based financial aid, ranging from small annual stipends of \$1,500 to full support for tuition, room, board, fees and laptop (\$15,000/year). 2022 scholarship priorities include:

- Named scholarships. Donors can make scholarship contributions of any amount and may sponsor named awards with a contribution of \$60k.
- Endowments. AUF's revised and expanded [endowment policy was approved in 2020 and formalized](#) a new menu of offerings for donors interested in contributing to Ashesi scholarships in perpetuity. Donors may now establish an endowed general scholarship fund with a contribution of \$30k and a named fund with a contribution of \$400k.

Campus Growth - Student Housing

A fully immersive campus experience is an important part of an Ashesi education. In addition to promoting a strong campus culture, on-campus student housing plays a very important role in convincing families to send their daughters to Ashesi, especially in their first year. As such, the university's current ten-year plan seeks to improve the availability of on-campus housing. 73% of first-year students currently live on campus. We seek to increase that ratio to 100%.

Gifts of all sizes help secure housing for students and help to enrich students' campus and classroom experiences. Last year, with partial funding from USAID/ASHA, Hostel 2D was constructed, adding 120 beds to on-campus housing. This year, Ashesi aims to raise \$3.45m to fund the construction of a new on-campus hostel, Hostel 2E.

Research

Research is an integral component to an Ashesi education. Student and faculty research addresses Africa's most challenging issues and is guided by a desire for impact in scholars' fields of study, their communities, and also across the continent.

Ashesi Foundation raises support for a wide range of research activities including:

- Faculty research grants.
- Cross-disciplinary research.
- Stipends and training for research assistants and faculty interns.
- Online visiting faculty.

Supporting Student Research

Throughout their four years at Ashesi, students are encouraged to pursue original research. This gives students an opportunity to tackle real-world problems, work side-by-side with their professors, and participate in international competitions. The Ashesi Institutional Repository (AIR) ensures that students' scholarly is preserved, indexed, and showcased for a global audience. Students who produce strong research products have the privilege of having their work published on AIR.

Promoting Faculty Research

Ashesi encourages faculty and staff to share their research by publishing books and academic journal articles. These publications reflect the breadth of expertise and interests of Ashesi's community members.

Advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals

A 2019 Times Higher Education global ranking of universities lists Ashesi University among the world's best, based on impact and contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ashesi's main strengths are in contributing to Quality Education (Goal 4), Gender Equality (Goal 5), Reducing Inequalities (Goal 10), and Partnerships for the Goals (Goal 17).

Your contribution to the Research Fund will help drive original research on Africa's most challenging issues and fuel the impact of students and faculty in their communities, the continent, and the world. Another way to support research in perpetuity is by funding an endowment. Learn more about Ashesi endowments [here](#).

Fund for Service Program

The Fund for Service provides structured support and funding to student-led projects in service to the community at large. With a historic focus on serving children and youth, the program began in 2015 as an experiment in learning through hands-on service. With incubation support from the Ford Foundation, the program has grown through three phases and launched over 70 projects - many of which continue today. Fund for Service projects often involve support for education and youth mentoring while others explore innovation in agriculture, sanitation, health, technology, and sports programming. At the conclusion of Ford Foundation's incubation, a new source of funding is needed to continue this valuable learning model for students and impact in the community.

Over 70 distinct student projects have received funds, training, and coaching since 2015. These projects have impacted several thousand people across Ghana, especially in our host community of Berekuso. Your contribution will help build a permanent program to support students as they actively solve the problems faced by the local community. With annual funding of just \$95,000, up to 24 new student projects can be funded each year - a blend of proof-of-concept projects and projects ready to launch. We expect upwards of 40 projects to be underway across the student body at any given time.

Support at all levels helps keep this valuable service-learning opportunity going:

- \$500
- \$5000
- \$95,000
- \$285,000
- \$2,000,000

Faculty Capacity Building

Our faculty are breaking new ground in their fields. Supporting our faculty's professional development strengthens the academic and social experience of both faculty and students and ensures that Ashesi builds on its track record of excellence. 2022 priorities for faculty development include:

- PhD acquisition.
- Endowed support. Donors may endow a faculty chair for \$1m or more, depending on the position selected, and with a contribution of \$30k+ they also have the option to contribute to Ashesi's endowment for Faculty Development and Research. These contributions provide a permanent source of support that will fund salaries, research, and travel in perpetuity.
- Online fellowships. During the pandemic, international faculty members have an unprecedented opportunity to teach courses online and contribute to Ashesi's mission without relocating to Ghana. \$10k will fund one virtual faculty member for one semester course.
- Conference participation and research support.

Conclusion

By developing its partnership base and engaging funders from continental Europe, Ashesi will further strengthen its foundation as an institution focused on preparing African leaders to take on the challenges of the future. With the right partners, we believe Ashesi University can play a formative role in equipping leaders throughout Africa with the foundations needed to turn challenges into opportunities, setting their sights on new horizons for growth and impact.

Appendices

Appendix A: Leadership

Ashesi University

Patrick Awuah, Founder & President

Before founding Ashesi University, Patrick worked as a Program Manager for Microsoft where, among other things, he spearheaded the development of dial-up internet working technologies and gained a reputation for bringing difficult projects to completion.

He holds bachelor's degrees in engineering and Economics from Swarthmore College; an MBA from UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business; and honorary Doctorates from Swarthmore College, Babson College and the University of Waterloo.

He has won many prestigious international awards including the MacArthur Fellowship; the McNulty Prize; and Membership of the Order of the Volta -- one of Ghana's highest awards, given to individuals who exemplify the ideal of service to the country. In 2015, Patrick was named one of the World's 50 Greatest Leaders by Fortune, and received the Elise and Walter A. Haas International Award, given to UC Berkeley alumni with distinguished records of service to their countries.

Patrick served on the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) of the U.S. Agency for International Development from 2010 to 2016. He is a Fellow of the Africa Leadership Initiative of the Aspen Global Leadership Network; a member of the Council on Foreign Relations; and a member of the Tau Beta Pi honor society for excellence in engineering.

Araba Botchway, Director of Admissions and Financial Aid

Prior to her role at Ashesi, Araba worked as the Program Officer for the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) in West Africa for a period of 12 years. She holds a Bachelor's degree in French with Spanish from the University of Ghana, a post graduate diploma in Marketing of Services from the Maastricht School of Management (Netherlands), an Executive MBA from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, a certificate in Management of Higher Education Institutions from the Galilee College (Israel), and a certificate in Project Management from Syncom Business Intelligence (South Africa).

Yasmin Bucknor, Chief Operating Officer

Yasmin holds a bachelor's degree in Economics and International Relations from Cornell University, and an MBA from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan. She began her career in the financial services industry in New York as an investment banker at Société Generale where she focused on asset-based finance. After her MBA, she worked as a director in corporate finance at American Express.

Yasmin is passionate about non-profit management and making an impact in the lives of African youth. Prior to joining Ashesi, she was the Chief Operations Officer at IkamvaYouth, a South African non-profit focused on empowering disadvantaged youth through education, where she helped scale the organization's student reach threefold. Yasmin grew up in the Ivory Coast and is fluent in French.

Angela Owusu-Ansah, Provost

As Provost, Angela Owusu-Ansah supervises all academic matters. Prior to Ashesi, Angela was a Professor of Doctoral Studies, and a Faculty Chair of dissertation research, at Concordia University. She also served as a national commissioner for the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), a major accrediting agency of over 700 higher education institutions. Prior to working at Concordia University, she served as the Associate Dean for Research and Development, under the Faculty Administrative Fellow, Assistant to the President and Director of the Center for Access & Success at Elon University. She was also the Associate Dean of the School of Education, the Director of the Master of Education Programs, Coordinator of Unit Assessment and Accreditation, Licensure Officer, and Chair of Teacher Education Programs, at Elon University. Prior to that she served as Assistant Dean and Associate Professor at Samford University, Orlean Bullard Beeson School of Education.

She was educated in Ghana (BA in psychology with sociology), Spain (MS in International Educational Administration, and certificate in TESOL), the United States (Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration, Quantitative Research Methods and Social Science Statistics, and Instructional Technology), with a residency at Oxford University, United Kingdom. Her research interests include assessment of quantitative literacy, educator preparation provision, and intercultural competence.

Abdul Madhi, Dean of Students & Community Affairs

Prior to Ashesi, Abdul was the Director of Full-time and Professional MBA Program at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Champaign. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and an MBA from Governor State University in Illinois. Abdul has 15+ years' experience in designing, forecasting, marketing and implementing programs to yield results in corporate and non-for-profit sectors and 13 years of experience in higher education working with a diverse population of faculty, staff and students.

Ebenezer Buckman, Chief of Staff to the President & Director of University Communications

Eben has served in various capacities at Ashesi University since 2011, and currently leads the communication, alumni engagement and fundraising teams at the University in his role as the Director of University Communications. He also serves as Chief of Staff to the President, helping implement strategic initiatives from the Office of the President; and Secretary to the Board, serving as a key liaison between Board members and the University. He holds a bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems from Ashesi, and was a Middle East and Africa Talent scholarship recipient at IE Business School, where he earned his master's degree in Corporate Communications.

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Ashesi University Foundation

Joanna Bargeron, Vice President

When she joined Ashesi in 2008, Joanna brought 14 years of non-profit fundraising and administration experience as Development Director and Trustee of Seattle Midwifery School and Assistant Regional Director of Women in Community Service. She earned a BA in Liberal Arts from St. John's College and an MPA from UW's Evans School of Public Affairs. Joanna first traveled to Africa as a Peace Corps volunteer teaching math in The Gambia.

Megan MacDonald, Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships

Megan has over a decade of experience mobilizing resources to ensure access to education, credit and global markets in developing countries. Most recently she served as the CEO of Sasa Designs, where she led the many regulatory, legal and financial parameters of a growing social enterprise. In 2015, Megan negotiated the asset sale and brand transfer of Sasa Designs to Greater Good Wholesale, a division of CharityUSA.com. Megan's Entrepreneurial Studies from Stanford University's Graduate School of Business IGNITE program, as well her MA in International Development from the University of Nairobi, guide a unique approach to non-profit development, entrepreneurship, partnerships and strategy.

Korrie Miller, Director of Strategic Partnerships

Korrie joined Ashesi after nearly a decade working in higher education student development and advancement at the University of Washington (UW). She holds a BA in Comparative History, a Master's in Education Policy and a Business Certificate from UW. She is deeply passionate about supporting emerging leaders achieve their fullest potential through earnest relationship building and philanthropy.

Rachel Bates Wilfahrt, Director of Prospect Management and Research

Rachel joined Ashesi after a decade working in data and prospect research and management roles in Colorado. She holds a BA in Sociology from the University of North Dakota and a Master of Library and Information Science from the University of Denver. She is active in the Special Libraries Association, previously serving as President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter, and received the association's Rising Star Award in 2013.

Camille Smith, Grant and Operations Coordinator

Camille grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, and recently graduated from Truman State University with a BA in Finance and Spanish. She has studied in Costa Rica and Spain, and came to Ashesi after a year of work in the international development field at Zidisha, a microfinance organization with operations in Ghana.

Kayla Apronti, Donor Communications Officer

Prior to joining Ashesi, Kayla worked as the Advancement Assistant at Lincoln Community School where she provided support in the areas of marketing, development and community

relations. Kayla earned her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Ashesi University and MS in Mass Communication from Boston University.

Ashesi University Foundation Board of Directors

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<p>Emer Dooley Entrepreneurship Faculty, University of Washington PhD, University of Washington MBA, University of Washington</p>	

Appendix B: Endorsements of Ashesi’s Impact

a. President of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, speaking at Ashesi’s 2018 Commencement Ceremony

“I am particularly excited, with the setting up of the Engineering school here at Ashesi. It provided the proof, if some was still necessary, that indeed Ashesi was setup to meet the needs of Ghana, and of the continent. Within the short period of its existence, the University made a name for itself in the fields of Business Administration & Computer Science. Ashesi could have chosen to stick to these and other areas, that would not require expensive inputs. But you remained true to your mission, and so today the university has an Engineering school, and a first-class one at that. I’m glad, that Ashesi’s efforts are being recognized, and praised around the world, and I am proud to share in its glory, as a Ghanaian.

I urge you, Ashesi Class of 2018, to always keep in mind that you will be judged by the high standards set by your university. An Ashesi graduate is expected to be well equipped and well-versed in whatever area of study he or she has offered. Ashesi graduates will be relied on not to cut corners and not be afraid of hard work. An Ashesi graduate will be expected to have a firm moral compass. These attributes should apply to all of us in our various areas of work and enterprise.”

b. Former President of Ghana, His Excellency John Mahama, speaking at the inauguration of Ashesi’s permanent campus in 2011

Ashesi has distinguished itself as a first-class institution that combines credible academic achievements with community service. [...] In this regard, Ashesi has taken the lead by raising the bar in higher education with the blend of liberal arts in its curriculum which makes your students critical thinkers and problem solvers. These are the type of products Ghana requires its universities to produce to enable the nation to address its challenges of development. I therefore expect the

products of Ashesi to develop entrepreneurial skills which will enable them set up their own businesses after school instead of seeking employment in the public sector.

Ashesi's contribution to national development is highly commendable. Your students are found in all sectors of the economy. [...] We must equip our new graduates with skills that allow them to think outside the box, to question the status quo, and to innovate. And that is exactly what Ashesi University is doing.

c. Professor Philip Clay, former Chancellor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in the paper, "The Case and a Model for the Transformation of Higher Education in Africa (2016)."

Institutions can start small and grow as resources become available. To achieve excellence and relevance, it is generally not advisable to start by developing something mediocre and hoping that quality will improve over time; instead, excellence and relevance are much more likely to be achieved through the managed growth of an institution that is already of high quality. One example of this is Ashesi University, in Ghana. Started barely a decade ago, this institution was intended for excellence from the beginning, and over the past decade, it has slowly expanded in size and scope, most recently adding an engineering school.

d. William Easterly, Professor of Economics at New York University, in his book, "The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good."

I have visited Ashesi three times, and I was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and talent of the students. The curriculum teaches young Africans to solve problems, not just engage in rote memorization. This high-quality African university, started and run by a Ghanaian, which offers scholarships to young West Africans eager to improve their talents, deserves to attract more notice and support from Western donors.

e. MacArthur Foundation, in presenting a 2015 MacArthur Award to Ashesi President, Dr. Patrick Awuah

Students at Ashesi choose among degree programs in business management, computer science, management information systems, and engineering. All students participate in a four-year leadership seminar on ethics, collaboration, and entrepreneurship that concludes with a service-learning component. Fostering ethical leadership is central to the university's ethos, and in 2008, students established an honor code holding themselves responsible for ethical behavior, the first of its kind in African universities. In a little over a decade, Ashesi is already firmly established as one of Ghana's premier universities. Every one of its graduates has found quality employment, and almost all remain in Africa, where many have started much-needed information technology businesses.

f. President Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the US, Founder of the Carter Center

Ashesi fills an important need. By taking an innovative approach, the college has reached a new level of achievement and excellence and is an example for the rest of Africa.

