



The *inspirer*

November, 2022

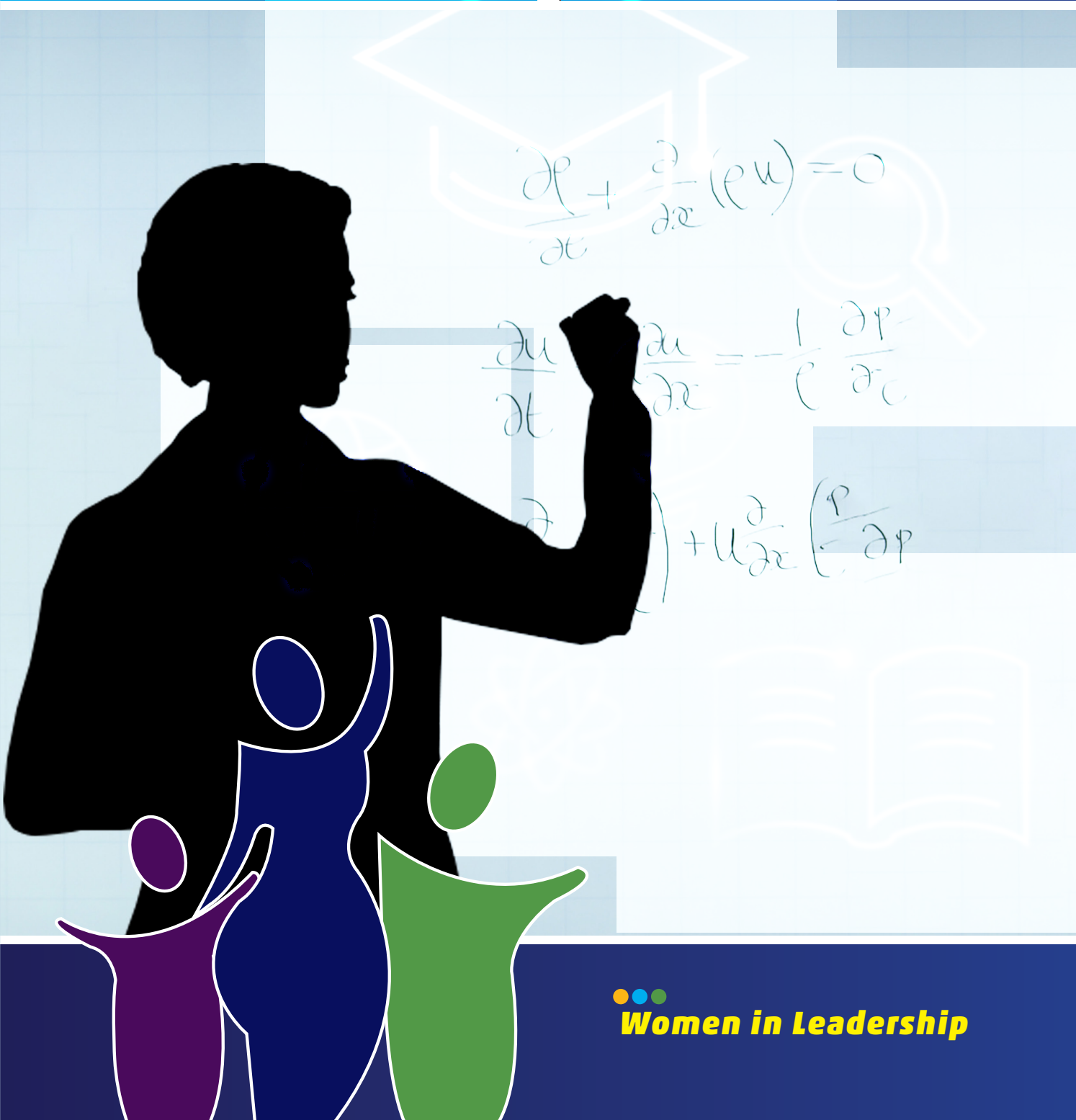




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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DESK

Dear WiSTEM^{Gh} Community and Friends,

We are thrilled to bring you another exciting edition of the Inspirer with a thematic focus on Women in Leadership. The role women play in leadership from homes to boardrooms and executive cabinets pervades history and it is time again to celebrate the gift of Women Leaders.

Leadership has been an age-long concept which concentrates and focuses the effort and resources of a group towards a common goal. Without leadership, all the socio-economic, political, and technological advancements the world currently enjoys will be missing. As the popular saying goes, “Everything rises and falls on Leadership”, it positions the service of leadership as pivotal.

More importantly, is the role of Women in Leadership. According to recent demographic data by the World Bank, women make up about 49.6% of the global population. One might expect that this demographic ratio of women to men will parallel the actualities in leadership on the global and country levels. However, this is not the current situation. While the proportion of women in leadership and executive roles have gradually increased over the years, women are still underrepresented in this arena.

It is thus timely and relevant for us to share the stories of some Women in leadership and garner lessons and key insights on their leadership journey in STEM fields. It is heartwarming to realize the pivotal roles these women play and the impact they make in their unique settings, from academia to Industry, and from boardrooms to shop floors. They generously detail the start of their professional life and the process of becoming the leaders they are today. This resonates with the

well-known quote; “Leaders aren’t born, they are made” by the legendary American football coach, Vince Lombardi. They share key lessons on work-life balance, the practicalities of how they dealt uniquely with challenges in life, the essence of upholding a value-driven leadership and not one that is fame-driven, the impact of family, role models, community, relevant networks, career coaches and mentors and how they are paying it forward by role modelling to the next generation.

Every one of them holds a piece in the puzzle of women in leadership and serves as a real example of the current woman in the global leadership landscape. One of the reasons for the low representation of women is due to the inadequate number of role models for young girls in the numerous career options in STEM. This however is set to change in the right direction as we observe more and more women take up leadership and executive roles in their professional careers.

At WiSTEM^{Gh}, we are inspired by these and many wonderful women in leadership and are committed to raising the next generation of women leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) through our several carefully curated programs and outreaches. I hope you get inspired by this unique edition of the Inspirer and find yourself in the pieces of stories these heroic and beautiful women have shared with us.

Onwards and upwards to Women in Leadership!

Thank you.

Prof. (Mrs.) Ibok Nsa Oduro

Prof. (Mrs.) Atinuke Olusola Adebajji

Dr. (Mrs.) Mercy Badu

Dr. (Mrs.) Augustina Angelina Sylverken

EDITORIAL

Though women have some traditional leadership roles in our communities, the number that find their way into the public sphere, and in leadership in particular is low. There has been some improvement the past decade but the ratio of women to men in public leadership in most jurisdictions is skewed towards men.

Women, however, over the years have proven to be excellent leaders when given the opportunity, even though the large majority shy away from public life due to their fear of scrutiny, criticism and verbal abuse in certain instances.

This edition of the INSPIRER is focused on **WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP**. Stories of women who have walked the journey of leadership either currently or sometime in the past share their stories with readers.

There are nine compilations from female leaders in the academic and corporate sectors in the Ghanaian community.

The editorial team has been inspired by these heartfelt stories and wish readers will be touched as well. Enjoy!!

By: Prof. Marian Asantewah Nkansah

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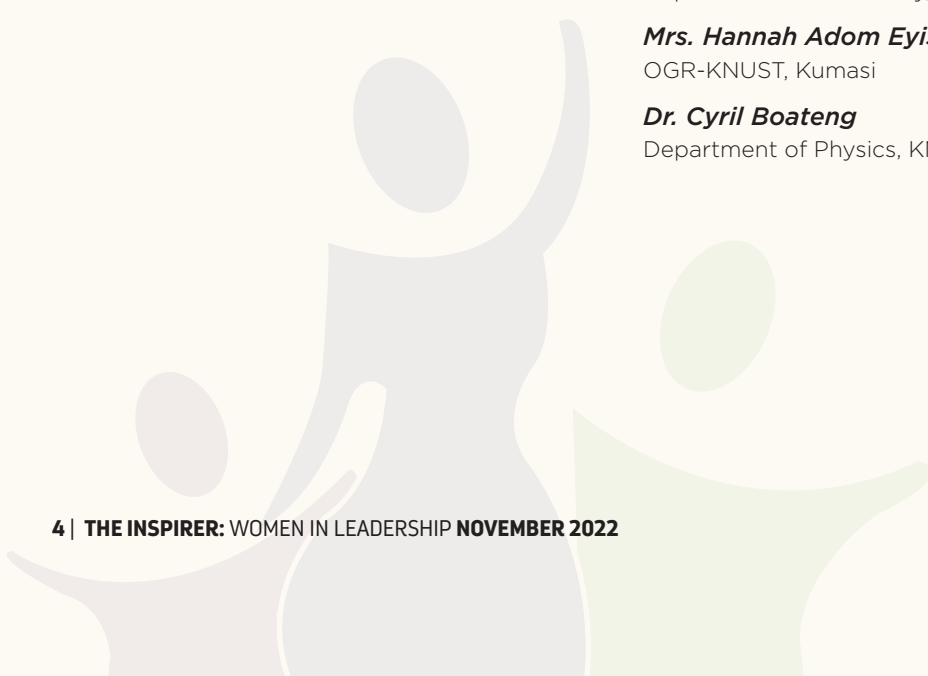
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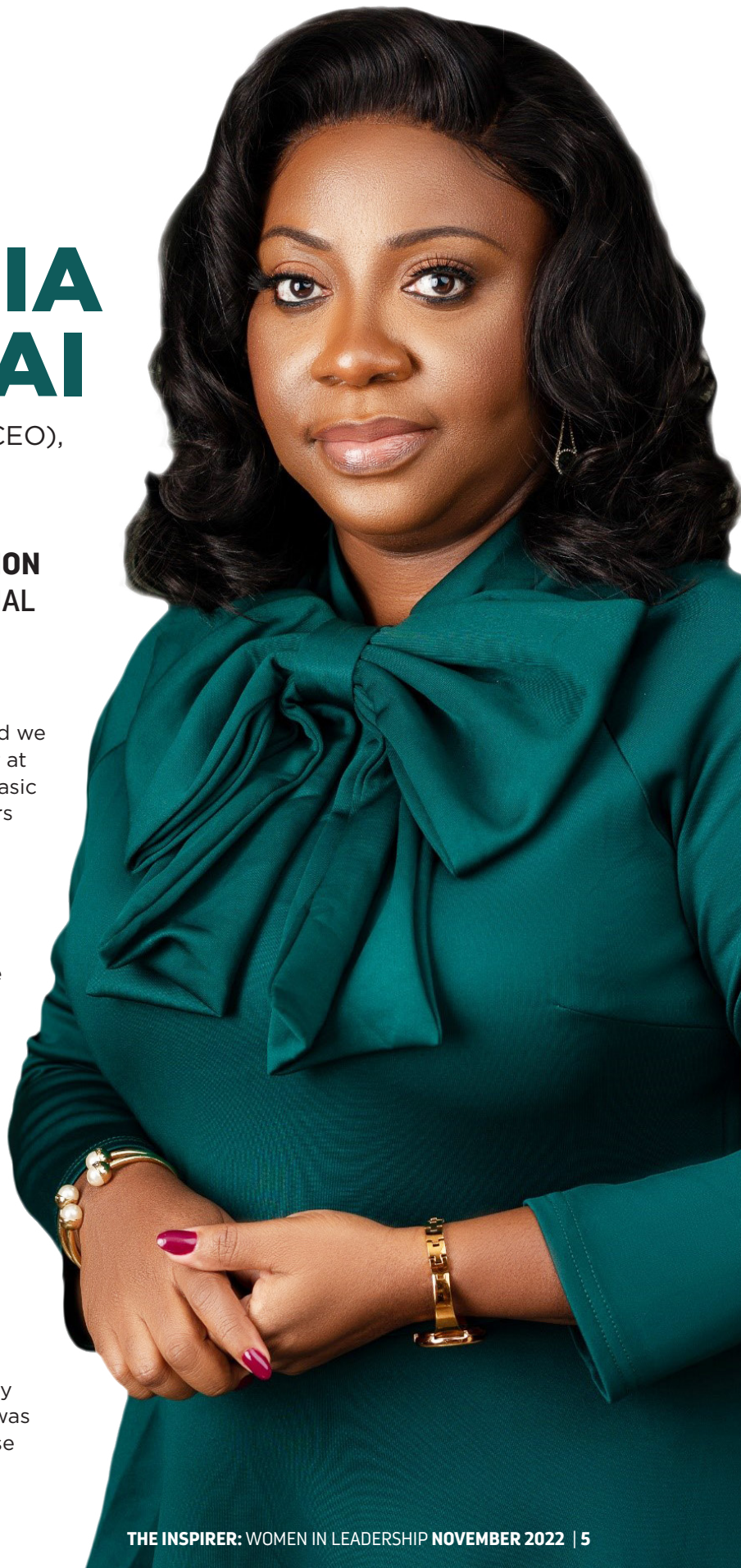
MRS. PATRICIA OBO-NAI

Chief Executive Officer (CEO),
Vodafone Ghana

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I come from a family of girls, and we lived primarily with my mother at Lartebiokoshie . I started my basic education at the Bishop Bowers school, also in Lartebiokoshie, and then went to St Roses for my O-Level education. I chose to have my A-Level education at Presbyterian Boys Secondary School (PRESEC) Legon because I wanted to pursue science. My mother was very liberal, so we could pursue anything we wanted, so I pursued science. I loved maths, physics, chemistry, and statistics because I kept saying it was not subjective; one plus one is two, and that is it. I loved Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and my parents allowed me to pursue it.

I then moved on to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) to study Electrical Engineering. The plan was to avoid Civil Engineering because



there is too much to read. I started my internship in my first year, and that is how I discovered my interest in working within the telecom industry. Until I graduated from KNUST, I did all of my internships at Millicom Ghana Limited (Tigo).

I started working full time with Millicom after my university education. I went through planning operations, deployment, and all the various units under the Technology Department. A few years down the line, I became the Technology Director. I held that position for about five years until the Vodafone opportunity came. While it seemed a lateral move, I was very interested in taking on the fixed business aspect of telecommunications, which only Vodafone had, so I took the role.

I came to Vodafone, deployed a lot of broadband, switched from copper to fibre, launched 3G and then 4G. Down the line, there was an opportunity to become the CEO, so one of the goals in my development plan was to move away from technology while still applying what I had learnt. I had to take some courses, which took me to INSEAD and Kellogg to take the management programmes in marketing and business strategy. I returned to lead the Fixed Business (broadband services) and added customer operations functions, which handle everything customer related. The Marketing Director then resigned, and I was given the opportunity to take over the function. I added that to my portfolio, and then in 2019, I had the opportunity to be interviewed and got the role as CEO.

WHEN AND WHERE DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

I discovered telecommunications during my internship as an Electrical Engineering student at KNUST. I have ever since continued to grow on this career path

to become the Chief Technology Officer at Millicom Ghana and then moved to Vodafone. It is the same desire for new challenges that led me to hold different director positions – Technology Director, Director of Customer Operations and Fixed Business, Acting Director of Consumer Business Unit (CBU), and then Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 2019.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

“The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Vodafone Ghana.”

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

I assumed this position in April 2019.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR ROLE?

As the CEO, I am responsible for making important corporate decisions, overseeing the entire operations and resources of a business, and serving as the primary liaison between the Board of Directors and Corporate Operations. I also act as the public face of the organisation and I am responsible for its reputation, growth, profitability, and overall operations.

ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

The major challenges include, making time to be present at every function and event; planning meetings and scheduled calls; and providing leadership during an unexpected event. As a CEO, you also have the responsibility of managing the organisation's relationship with customers and stakeholders, and at the same time, making sure the business is growing. This can be challenging sometimes.

DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

I have always said, "the greater the responsibility, the greater the reward." The CEO role is the highest-ranking executive, which means you will be the highest paid and also bear the greatest responsibility. You are responsible for the company's success or failure.

HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED IN THE MIDST OF FAME OR POPULARITY?

I am a very focused person. I would also say I am very determined. When I set out to achieve something I believe this is what continues to drive me, so I am not affected by the fame and popularity. For me, it is more about how I can use these platforms to impact more lives and inspire more women to become leaders.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

God is and will continue to be my greatest influence. I also believe in learning from those who have gone before me. I still have mentors and coaches who teach me and are always willing to help.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I believe in mentoring and role modelling. Even at this level in my profession, I have mentors. This is why I devote some of my time to mentoring and inspiring young people. Apart from the regular sessions with the young men and women I mentor, I also leverage bigger platforms such as the Ghana Youth Summit to reach out to the youth. I am a Christian and also spend time on church activities.

I am a member of the Executive Women's Network, a network of women leaders who provide mentorship and support for other women whilst driving advocacy on diverse female related issues.

I am also on a number of boards, including the International Advisory Council of the West Africa STEM Hub; the Global Youth Academy (GYA), an international organisation that provides a platform for outstanding young scientists; the KNUST Engineering Education Project (KEEP); and the KNUST Foundation. I have also recently taken an interest in golf and have lessons every week.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

I say it is possible to have both. I consider myself fortunate to have such a wonderful family and support system. It can be difficult at times, but maintaining a healthy balance is critical. My husband, who is also an engineer, is extremely busy, and so we need to be very intentional about building our home, including accepting external support. I still make time to cook for my family, and I spend a lot of quality time with my kids. I still put my youngest son to bed every evening except when I travel.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND? ANY HOBBIES?

I love spending time with my family. I love spending time with my youngest son and sisters.

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

You have chosen a path that has so much potential and offers limitless opportunities.

STEM jobs across the world are growing at a faster rate than other jobs. According to the International Finance Corporation (IFC), there will be 230 million digital jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2023.

As a country, our failure to produce enough STEM practitioners to meet modern day challenges and solve contemporary problems could result in a missed opportunity for Africa to shine.

You do have a role to play. Make it count and be an inspiration to many more women.



ANY FINAL WORDS?

Our society lacks an understanding of our STEM subjects. They lack understanding of the opportunities that are available to us. And that is why, sometimes unintentionally, they oppose young girls and make it difficult for you when you start work. The best person to show power and show worth is you. You must lead, and you must lead exceptionally. You must work hard when you go into corporate life or start your own business.

To the young ladies pursuing STEM out there, the world is still looking at you and saying, "Are you sure?" So, if you don't step up, if you don't lead, if you don't set an example for the world to see that it is possible, they will still cast doubt.

I challenge you to take up the opportunities that have been created for you, to show your worth and your power. When given the opportunity, women are powerful and great leaders.

Women in Ghana and across the world are transforming various industries by driving change and innovation in businesses and government. Businesses in the Western world, like in Asia and the Pacific regions have discovered that putting women in leadership positions -even better when we have technical knowledge - is good for business and the overall economy.

A portrait of Prof. (Mrs.) Esi Awuah, a Black woman with short, dark, curly hair. She is wearing a patterned, off-the-shoulder top and a matching skirt with a repeating floral motif in yellow and green on a grey background. She is also wearing a necklace with orange and white beads. The background is a solid yellow color.

PROF. (MRS.) ESI AWUAH

Foundation Vice Chancellor, University of
Energy and Natural Resources (UENR),
Sunyani-Ghana

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I was born in Akim Oda, where I attended Oda Anglican School for my basic education. For my 'O' level and 'A' level educations, I continued to Akim Oda Secondary School and Aburi Girls' Secondary School, respectively. My bachelor's degree was in Biological Sciences at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and my master's degree was in Environmental Science, at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, SUNY, Syracuse, New York. After working for over ten years as a lecturer at KNUST, I went to The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) IHE Delft in the Netherlands for my doctorate degree in Wastewater Treatment, a component of Sanitary Engineering.

WHEN, WHERE AND HOW DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE

I started working as a lecturer at the Department of Civil Engineering at KNUST in 1986.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I am currently on contract as a retired Full Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering, KNUST.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

Since 2016.

ELABORATE A BIT ON THE JOURNEY WHICH BROUGHT YOU HERE?

I became a Senior Lecturer in 1996 and Associate Professor 2002 and a Full Professor in 2014.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR ROLE?

In the course of my career, I became the Head of the Environmental Quality Engineering Section and headed two Departments, namely the Department of African Institute of Environment and Technology and the Department of Civil Engineering. I also became the Dean of the Faculty of Civil and Geomatic Engineering. In 2012, I was made the Foundation Vice-Chancellor of the University of Energy and Natural Resources until 2016 when I returned to KNUST, after my term of office ended.

ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

Not really, because all my children have left home and I am on retirement. I get a lot of invitations to serve on boards and give lectures to organizations and institutions. In addition, I review promotional papers and journal articles. Sometimes, the engagements are too numerous to honour because of my teaching and supervision, mostly of graduate students.

DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

I get a lot of respect.





ACHIEVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP POSITIONS HELD

- Officer of the Order of the Volta (OV) Award for Engineering Education in Ghana 2016
- Best Research Scientist for Environment, Water and Sanitation (Silver) 2011
- Ghana Brass Women of Excellence Award 2016
- Ghana National Students Ambassador Award 2016
- Sumanman Golden Adinkra State Award For Education 2016
- Akim Kotoku Women of Excellence Award 2016
- Honorary Fellow Ghana Institution of Engineering
- Life Time WASH Steward for unalloyed commitment towards the Sustainable Delivery of WASH in Ghana 2018
- Fellow of African Academic of Sciences 2014
- Distinguished Service Award from the Ayigya Circuit during the 170th Anniversary of the Methodist Church Ghana 2006
- Best Elsevier Scientific Paper 2006
- Certificate of Recognition of UNESCO Mondialogo for Research in Engineering 2006
- Chairman of Graduate Research Trust Fund 2020 to date
- Director of Africa SNOWS (Welcome Trust Funded Project of 9 institutions in Africa and 3 in Europe) 2009-2012
- Global Advisor for Sanitation Tank 2013 to date.
- Foundation VC- University of Energy and Natural Resources
- Commissioner of National Development Planning Commission 2021 to date
- Past Board Member the of Several Organizations, Zoomlion, Tripple S Wash cost, OWSD, Africa Institute of Mathematical Sciences (2010 to date) etc

HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED IN THE MIDST OF FAME OR POPULARITY?

I stay calm and rely on the Word of God as my principle to handling every situation.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

Sister Molly Agyarko Mensah of Aburi Girls Secondary School, when I was in elementary School. Dr. Mrs. Emelia Timp, when I was a graduate student. Dr. Christine Amoako Nuama when I started taking on leadership positions and as am growing old.

ANY FINAL WORDS



Fear God and worship him. See every work you do as an act of worship. Set goals in life and do all your works in excellence and with integrity.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I am a member of the Methodist church Singing Band and a tennis player. I also love cooking and cleaning.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

I manage and plan my time to execute my work and my life. I have reduced a lot of my extracurricular activities. I have stopped playing tennis and stopped playing organ in church.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

Still love to sing and thus still a member of the Singing Band and I conduct the band sometimes.

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

I am not exactly young. I am over sixty years. I exercise, eat well and interact with my family members, colleagues and friends. I still compose songs and I just composed one for the Ghana Institution of Engineering. I enjoy playing the organ whenever I have time.



PROF. (MRS.) IBOK ODURO

President Of Wistem-Ghana and Former
Provost, College Of Science-KNUST,
Kumasi-Ghana

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prof. (Mrs.) Ibok Oduro was born in Itung Mbang, a town in South-Eastern Nigeria. She completed her primary and secondary education at the Methodist Primary and Mary Hanney Secondary School in Oron, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. She joined her new parents at the University of Ibadan where she stayed and studied Chemistry for her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Seeing food as an important component of everyone's life coupled with her keen interest in chemistry, particularly reactions associated with food, and how emerging knowledge could add to the already existing knowledge regarding the creativity and innovation concerning food science and technology, motivated Ibok to enroll in a Ph.D. programme in Postharvest Technology.

WHEN AND WHERE DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

She began her professional career as a Research Assistant at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan, Nigeria in 1988. When she married her husband, who was then lecturing in Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Kumasi, she relocated to join him in Ghana. She worked at the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana as a Research fellow, and had the scholarship to pursue her Ph.D. at Silsoe College, Cranfield University in the United Kingdom. After completion, she came back to join KNUST in June 1996 as a

lecturer. She saw positions of headship and deanship as opportunities but always saw herself as a lecturer and felt closer to her role as a teacher and a mentor. She joined the Department of Biochemistry and became the Head of Department (2007-2009, 2010-2014) and later became the first Head of the Department for Food Science and Technology (2010-2014). During her headship at the Department of Food Science and Technology in 2014, the deanship position was vacant and she served as the Dean of the Faculty of Bioscience, even though it was for a short duration (2015 -2016). She has been a Vice-Dean of Students (2002 - 2006) and the Hall Warden of the Chancellor's Hall (2006 -2007). In 2016,

she applied for the position of Provost when the position was advertised and was successfully selected as the first female Provost for the College of Science and KNUST.

She is presently a Lecturer on contract at KNUST after retirement. She is a Council member of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ghana and has held this position for over 8 years since 2014, Advisory Board Member for KNUST Enactus team as well as the Chairperson of the International Leadership Foundation, Ghana. She is a Mentor and assists people in discovering their potential. She is a Mentor for Food System Network Africa since 2021.

JOURNEY THAT HAS BROUGHT HER THIS FAR

The journey has been challenging and contorted. But the best part was having very encouraging parents, and a supportive family. Also, what kept her going on this journey is the identity she found in Jesus Christ. These areas of her life nurtured her and gave her the ease to excel and remain focused. Her father gave equal opportunities to all gender and therefore, she had no inhibition in

choosing her career that was always so clear to her from the beginning. Her husband is ever supportive and does not see her as a threat but rather sees the best in her and always encourages her in identifying her potential.

She grew up with boys and therefore took part in a lot of sporting activities like running 100 m, 200 m, high jump, relay races, netball, squash and basketball. In secondary school, she was encouraged to sprout, grow and mature resisting negative forces from outside

to suppress her in moving higher. Her teachers in secondary school understood the importance of sports and the impact on her dreams, so they would spend extra time and hours after a sporting event to cover what she missed in class. This motivated her, even more, to follow her dreams and identify her potential without inhibition. In the university, she, however, reduced sporting activities. She indicated that there is a gap in the current generation that needs to be filled in their growth at this

stage as sport builds other virtues such as discipline, stamina, resilience, and focus, to mention a few. In addition, you meet different blends of people and get the opportunity to learn and know more about different cultures and societies. Her spouse is also a sports person so this also made her continue participation in sporting activities even after marriage.

CHALLENGES THAT SHE FACED WITH ROLES SHE IS HOLDING RIGHT NOW

It is always challenging because it involves managing people of different ages, different thinking, and different backgrounds. Her present role exposes her to a lot of people who misunderstand her. After those backlashes, she withdraws herself and reflects on if those steps she took were correct and how she can help to bring about the best in the people. In nurturing and

managing people, you will go through a lot of challenges, a lot of people will get hurt, others will leave you along the way, and others will move along with you. But one thing she believes is that, when she knows she did her best with all her heart, love, and care, she leaves the consequences in the hands of God.

DO YOUR CURRENT ROLES COME WITH PERKS AND PRIVILEGES?

The privilege of taking care of human beings is what she enjoys most. It is a key privilege that you are partnering with God to bring out the best in people. She feels privileged in sharing her thoughts, and her blessings, being able to influence positively is all beyond monetary gains. Even now, her students visit her, cook together and eat together as a family on occasions. She believes that if the people are brought up properly with godly values, the privileges will come.



HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED AMID FAME AND POPULARITY?

“Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim that anything comes from us, but our competence comes from God” 2 Corinthians 3:5

“Partnering with the grace of God makes you humble, knowing it not about you but Him”. In totality, she gives thanks to God for feeling special in the hands of God in all her achievement.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS AND INFLUENCES WHEN YOU GREW UP?

Her family including her parents were her greatest influencers. Her dad especially was a great influencer as he opened her eyes to knowing God. She prayed when growing up that God blesses her with a husband who practices Christ and not just a churchgoer and she was blessed with exactly that. At the workplace, she had colleagues who understood and appreciated her. Lastly, her students are also her influencers as they have helped her to shape herself into becoming what she is today. They are very intelligent and know how to bring the best out of their teachers.

ANY OTHER ACTIVITIES ASIDE FROM HER USUAL ROLE

Giving leadership talks to the youth and mentoring the youth to prepare them to take over. The recent visit to South Africa was to support an early career colleague from Zimbabwe in her career progression. The ability to communicate and network is very important and that is what she enjoys doing now alongside looking after her granddaughter.

HOW DO YOU FIND A WORK-LIFE BALANCE WITH EVERYTHING AROUND YOU?

She is very comfortable with how she has timed her roles in all aspects of life. She feels time management is a big challenge and people have to prioritize and manage time. These should also change with age as we grow. At this stage, where her role is to facilitate her students learning regarding their research work. She is able to make them comfortable to the extent that they can visit her residence to receive any teaching and guidance with their work and at the same time assist her with challenges she also faces at home like looking after her grandchild or cooking or any other domestic chores they feel they can support her with. So, it is all a form of networking and she feels we can support each other without barriers irrespective of where we find ourselves.

She has realized that the new generation is isolated and not open to others and they don't want to share responsibilities with others. She feels we should learn from the older generation because networking and connecting with other people is important as it helps us to relate and create a new family which is very key for our generation. This way we share our responsibilities and that is key to our mental health too. We need to create this network for the future generation to ensure our children can grow up to feel they are connected with people like them and realize the support in each other. She believes the WiSTEM initiative is not only for career progression but a supporting platform for shared responsibilities and care for one another. She also feels the Wellness Center is a great initiative because she sees people networking, and laughing, and feels a new mental mindset established positively.



*...remember
that it is not
about you
but rather the
people you
are working
with*



HOW DO YOU UNWIND- HOBBIES?

She loves to read, sing and dance in her room. She does morning walk with her husband and they have very good communication which is key to good mental health. They see people and discover new topics for communication every day. She also enjoys working with food because it provides opportunity for creativity and fun.

Any advice for the younger generation

The new generation should open up. She believes that vulnerability has its good sides because when you experience pain, it shapes you for the future. She knows the youth have great potential and they should improve communication with their peers as it will bring out the best in them.

They should not waste their pain but use the painful experience to give a helping hand to others (The Samaritan Story (Luke 10:29-37) and not withdraw from people and their environment.

FINAL WORDS

People feel leadership is about being in power, and money, but it is not, it involves dealing with different mindsets. If you are ready to take up leadership roles, then one must remember that it is not about you but rather the people you are working with, how to bring the best out in people and transform them to bring the best out of people for a better system or society.



REV. SR. PROF. EUGENIA AMPORFU

Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences,
KNUST-Kumasi, Ghana

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I grew up in Kumasi, specifically Ashanti New Town (Ash-Town), where I was born. We lived in a compound house until I moved to boarding school. Growing up, my dad worked with Ghana Airways in Accra and we occasionally visited him during our vacations. I went to primary school at Roman Girls' School,

currently the Saint Louis Teacher Training School. Unfortunately, my dad, who was the main breadwinner passed on when I was twelve years and my mum who was then a teacher earned very little. I lived mostly between Ash-Town, with my mother and an aunt who lived in a bungalow at Asokwa. In summary, I had a very humble beginning.

WHEN AND WHERE DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

I came to KNUST in the year 2006 as a lecturer upon completing my PhD, in 2010. I was promoted to Senior Lecturer and in 2016 I became an Associate Professor. When I came to KNUST in 2006, things were very different then. I had different expectations even though I grew up in Ghana as I had lived in Canada for almost 15 years. When I got appointed, I was assured of an office, internet, and phone. However, on arrival, I got the office, with no internet access or phone. To access messages from the internet, you had to go to Adum. After some time, a communication center was available at the Africa Hall on campus, and after some time, we eventually had access to the internet. It was quite a struggle working at my optimum, to have access to literature, conduct research and to write manuscripts for publications. These were obstacles although frustrating and challenges didn't deter me from achieving my goals. The best option in these circumstances is to improvise, and get the most done with the little resources available, else one is prone to blame things, people and society.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

Currently, I am the Dean of the Faculty of Social Science.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

Fourth year as Dean.

ELABORATE A BIT ON THE JOURNEY WHICH BROUGHT YOU HERE?

I didn't go to any fanciful private school but I went to St. Hubert Seminary because I wanted to become a "Sister". From there, I went to the St. Louis Secondary School for my Sixth Form education and then entered convent to become a "Sister" in December 1989. In 1990, I travelled to Canada to study (B. A. Economics) for my bachelors, at the Saint Francis Xavier University, in Antigonish. I had my Master's Degree from the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada in November 1996, also in Economics. Finally, I obtained my Doctorate Degree in Economics from the Simon Fraser University, Canada in November 2004. I then came to KNUST to teach.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR ROLE?

The Faculty of Social Sciences has seven departments; it is the largest faculty in KNUST and has the largest number of departments. We run several programs. During my tenure as Dean, we continued our ongoing building to the level we moved in. It's been a lot of struggle because the Faculty of Social Sciences is not that endowed financially. It has been a financial struggle as we need to maintain the structure and only four departments were able to move here. God has been very faithful, through it all. We have gotten some support externally to get to where we are now but we still need financial aid.

As a Dean, we introduced programmes like the "Dean's Honour List" to motivate our hardworking staff and students. This award also builds the curriculum vitae (CV) of students to be more competitive on the job market. We also rank faculty members and senior members to motivate them, in categories like best lecturer in research. We continuously organize social science lectures to discuss and share perspectives on social and topical issues. We are currently organizing a public lecture on the electronic levy (e-levy), for instance, to listen to different perspectives and to provide the opportunity for people to ask questions and air their views.

ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I have already given the financial challenges with executing projects as a Dean. With regards to being a sister, I think there are pros and cons to my job. Because I'm a sister, people are more likely to open up, trust me and want to seek counsel from me. However, on the other side, people want to hide dubious things like corruption due to the fear of being judged. You don't get to know the "kuluulu" (bad deeds).

With regards to being a female, I think being a female has got its own pros and cons too. Most females tend to be meticulous about their endeavour, their surroundings and even spending. We are good at managing resources. Most times when there are demands to do this or that, "we want that, we want that"... I have to keep on saying, "no, we cannot afford" and it's true we can't afford. It's my wish that we make our lives comfortable as much as possible, but the constraints of finances still exist, you have no option than to decline some requests, although they seem needful.

DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

I have the opportunity to mentor others and improve on the conditions of others. I have a lot of services rendered to me out of good-will. These are tiny things in the form of respect, you come to the office people want to carry your bag etc.

HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED IN THE MIDST OF FAME OR POPULARITY?

I do not let people's words and actions define me. I always keep reminding myself of who I am and I encourage myself in the Word of God.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

My mother, Mrs. Hannah Amporfu, who was a teacher as well, was my greatest influencer. She instilled in me at a very young age principles of integrity, hard work and perseverance. She always emphasized the importance of being financially independent and being a career woman. Aside my mum, priests and lecturers have served as springboards and an inspiration to attain higher goals, personally and professionally.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I must confess I don't find time to engage in other social activities as I have so much to do in my pledges. In fact, in addition to being a Dean, I'm also a captive in my own

institute. I play a leadership role, hence the real chance I get to socialize is when I'm in the house or at the school. In the house, I have other sisters and when there is an occasion, I get visitors and get to see people I have seen in a long while. I like to sing, dance and chat.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

As a sister, I need prayer time and I live in the community. In the house, there are about four of us that live together so we have time for prayer and we have time to sit and chat but lately I haven't been punctual. The balance has shifted, more work than fun, I therefore try to enjoy whatever I find myself doing.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

Now reading has become my joy.

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

I will tell my younger self to stay focused, not to give up and to know who she is, and not to allow society to define her. I will also tell her to stay close to God as that will make her stable even in the midst of difficulties, and that when she falls, she should get up and stay focused.

ANY FINAL WORDS

I thank you for this opportunity and I thank God for being faithful as He doesn't fail, and for being interested in me. He has brought me this far and that gives me joy and hope to continue. I am very grateful to the Lord for my life, my friends, co-workers, and my family.

PROF. RUBY HANSON

FORMER DEAN, FACULTY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION.
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA



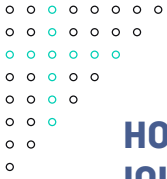
BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I was born in Winneba but brought up in Saltpond where my parents worked. The family relocated to Berekum when I was about to start formal education. I, therefore, had my primary 1 and 2 education in Berekum. We later relocated to Kumasi, where I had a greater part of my primary education at State Experimental School. This was followed by Secondary School education at St. Louis Secondary, and Teacher Training education at Wesley College.

I had my Bachelors Degree in Chemistry and Integrated Science Education

at University of Education, Winneba. My graduate degrees are a Master of Science in Environmental Toxicology and Analytical Chemistry at the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast and a Doctorate in (field is missing) at the University of Education, Winneba.

In addition, I undertook other short programmes at Vrije University and University of Utrecht, all in the Netherlands, and finally a course in developing and teaching e-courses on the Moodle platform in the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand.



HOW DID YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY START?

I started my professional life as a teacher in Winneba. I subsequently moved to Akwatia and then returned to Winneba, where I have been teaching until now. I am currently in my first year of post-retirement contract after serving as an acting Pro-Vice Chancellor for a short while and the Dean of the Faculty of Science Education for four years in the University of Education, Winneba. I also served as an Academic Counsellor, Examination Officer and Head of the Department of Chemistry during the early part of my active years in service.

HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED IN THE MIDST OF FAME OR POPULARITY?

I take each day at a time and every moment at a time. I learned early in life that calm heads think better and so I try to remain calm in the midst of chaos and time-bound demands.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

I read a lot of story books as a child and always wanted to be a writer (of novels for children and adolescents). I had no science or female role models. I only wanted to write captivating stories like Enid Blyton and put together local stories as classics.



WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I organized Chemistry fairs for children between 10-15 years with grant support from American Chemical Society. I also served as a member of my church council.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Quite easy to manage.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

Gardening provides me with tranquility.

ANY FINAL WORDS

I encourage young females to believe in themselves; that they can do whatever they aspire to do. All things are possible through Christ who has kept them until now. It is always well in Him.





**PROF. (MRS.)
ATINUKE
OLUSOLA
ADEBANJI**

HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS,
KNUST-KUMASI, GHANA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I was born the third of nine children and the second female. My mom worked in the Bank as a Teller and later became a Manager while my dad worked as the Personnel Manager of Tate & Lyle Sugar Company. We lived in the staff quarters at GRA, Ilorin, Kwara State Nigeria. My maternal Grandmom was the main

influence in my early childhood. Most of my childhood memories were made with her.

My education up to the first degree were at Ilorin. I started my primary education at Ideal Nursery School and later continued at Bishop Smith Primary School. After primary school education I later attended Government High School from form 1 to form 2. I later transferred to Queen Elizabeth Secondary School for forms 3 to 5. For A'Level, I attended School of Basic Studies at Kwara State Polytechnic and later went on to study statistics at the University of Ilorin.

WHEN, WHERE AND DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

I started work right after National Service in 1991 at the External Trade Unit of the Federal Office of Statistics, Ikoyi, Lagos and moved to UAC in 1992. I left regular work after my first baby was born because finding good care for her while at work proved a tough challenge. In the midst of these challenges, I was also schooling to write accounting professional exams. Furthermore, I went into dress making, selling clothes for children, industrial kitchen staff garb, and running a provision store as well.

I returned to regular work in 2003 as an Assistant Lecturer at the Department of Mathematics, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. So, my unconventional professional life either began in 1991 or 2003 depending on how you interpret professional life. If you ask me, I will say 1991.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I am currently a Professor of Statistics.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

4 years.

ELABORATE A BIT ON THE JOURNEY WHICH BROUGHT YOU HERE?

Elaborating doesn't come easy in mathematical sciences. You either prove, show or deduce etc. So, I am not sure I can sufficiently elaborate, but suffice to say that on my journey from Assistant Lecturer in 2003 to Full Professor in 2018, I will be honest in attributing a lot to providence, conscientious hard work and also maintaining a narrow focus. I have made huge personal sacrifices and experienced major challenges as a consequence, but it's been worth the price.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR ROLE?

Teaching, research and community service in addition to administrative responsibilities within and outside the university.



ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

Every role has challenges, even idling could pose a challenge. I think it's how you see it that matters.

The major challenges would probably be the birth process of a new department. Thankfully, I had previous experience midwifing the birth of a new Statistics Department in my previous role at the University of Agriculture. Other challenges have to do with work home balance (due to rapidly changing family demographics), and maintaining a unique identity while managing work relationships. I guess I could also add working as a foreigner away from home and only female in the Mathematics Department for 12 years. These might not necessarily qualify as challenges, but these are issues that have taken extra and deliberate effort to navigate, circumvent or overcome.



DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

Not really, besides the responsibility allowance. It rather puts more responsibility on my shoulders because the department is the nucleus of the university.



HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED IN THE MIDST OF FAME OR POPULARITY?

I am neither famous nor popular but will cross that bridge when I get there.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

My maternal Grandmom deserves that credit even though she died when I was 14. My mom was also an influence because she was a pioneer manager at a bank branch in our state. She was the only female manager I knew and she was fondly referred to as the white woman of Union Bank Ilorin (formerly Barclays Bank). She was also most of the time the only female face in the management pictures but she passed on early at 46 years. Besides these two wonderful women, the other major influence was Madam Deborah Lappidoth, Chief Justice of the Court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim. I met her early in my Christian journey and she was a very strong influence in my decisions.

Other persons such as Prof Kasey Garba (an Economist at the University of Ibadan) Prof Ibok Oduro also played a role in my journey here. I did not have a role model in my field.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I am sociable but very reserved. I am also not given to visiting and would avoid funerals as much as I can because it sometimes brings back painful memories. Most of my time off work is spent at

home. I love gardening and have a fruits and vegetable garden. If school is not in session, my car might spend days in the car port. So, in terms of a social life, I am not sure I have one.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Common sense or gumption plays a major role here and when this seems inadequate, I follow the prompting from within because I know how God talks to me. I am considerate but I am not given to people pleasing. I also don't shy away from taking unpopular positions once I am fully convinced it's the right thing to do. So, I do the best to accommodate people's views and opinions on the job but not when it's about my life and family, God speaks first and then my family.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

I love reading and have a lovely study at home. I have quite a number of books (not as many as I would like to have but working on it). I like biographies, Mandela, Ford, Winston Churchill, Ericson etc . On African authors, I have all by Chinua Achebe, Chimamanda Adiche. Ola Rotimi, Cyprian Ekwensi, Ebo White and some South African authors too. I have read all but 1 novel by John Grisham. I enjoy the historical perspective of Lean Uris and the Christian neural networks in Francine Frivers. She is an excellent writer. I also thoroughly enjoy home decoration, but I don't get to do it often because it costs money.



ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

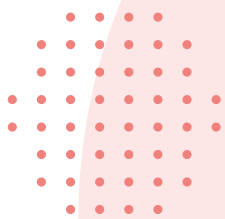
To my younger self, depending on what she has already been through, I would like to say, please get to know yourself and determine your destination quickly. This will determine all your decisions and what you make of the curve balls life will throw at you.

ANY FINAL WORDS

Completing this questionnaire was a tough decision for me because it meant opening up a part of myself which is not very easy for a naturally introverted person.

On a closing note, I think it helps to know that we are all different and God in His wisdom is writing different stories with us but all to fulfil His purpose and bring glory to His name. No one story is like the other and none is perfect because He is using imperfect vessels, and none should be judged by the content of another. Accept and validate who you are and be happy with you. That is all that really matters.





PROF. ESMERANDA MANFUL

BSc, MPA, PhD

Vice-Dean, International Programmes
Office - Knust, Kumasi-Ghana

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I was born in Accra, where it is ethnically diverse, and you learn to be friends with people who have different value systems. I had all my education except for the PhD in Accra.

WHEN AND WHERE DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

I started as an Assistant Research Officer at the Ghana National Commission on Children in 1994.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I am the Vice-Dean of KNUST's International Programmes Office.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

My appointment took effect on 1st January 2022.



ELABORATE A BIT ON THE JOURNEY WHICH BROUGHT YOU HERE?

Although I held acting leadership roles at the Regional and National levels at the Ghana National Commission on Children, I must say it has been the grace, favour and mercies of God that have brought me this far. I had never planned to be part of the University's Management. Also, I think my work ethic of contributing my best in every task could be a factor.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR POSITION?

The International Programmes Office was established directly under the Vice-Chancellor's office to address matters affecting the University visà-vis its relationship with other institutions, both national and international, concerning academic and research matters. I assist the Dean to attain the mandate of the office

ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

It is early days so I've not encountered any challenges.

DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

Yes, the privilege of serving the University. I thank the VC, Prof. Dickson, and her management for giving me the opportunity.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

I think my greatest influencer was my mum. She is a very assertive woman and always encouraged me to do my best.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I go to church and offer my expertise in different sectors of the Church.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

By separating the two as much as possible; having two different social networks helps.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

Yes, photography and cooking. Unfortunately, I do not get to do them now so I have resorted to watching cartoons and comedy.

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

Pray more and be less anxious; God is in control.

ANY FINAL WORDS

Always go the extra mile in every endeavour, let your motivation be excellence and that will set you apart.

PROF. ELSIE EFFAH KAUFMANN

Dean, School of Engineering Sciences, University of Ghana
Host, National Science And Maths Quiz, Ghana
Emy African Woman Of The Year, 2022

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I was born in Accra and grew up in Winneba, Koforidua and Kumasi (because both of my parents were teachers and moved the family whenever they went on transfer). My first school was ATTC Demonstration School in Winneba, then there was Nana Kwaku Boateng Experimental School in Koforidua. From there, I went to Aburi Girls' Secondary School for my O'Levels. While I was there, I got the opportunity to travel outside Ghana on scholarship as a representative of Ghana to the United World College of the Atlantic in Wales for my International Baccalaureate Diploma. I proceeded to the University of Pennsylvania in the US for a Bachelor of Science in Engineering (*Cum Laude*), Master of Science in Engineering and PhD, all in Bioengineering. I specialised in Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering.



*I am now a Professional Engineer,
Distinguished Fellow of Project
Management and a Fellow of Bioma-
terials Science and Engineering.*



WHERE AND WHEN DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE.?

I started my professional life after my PhD in 1998. I got a job as a post-doctoral fellow at Rutgers University in New Jersey, US. At the time, a new Center for Biomaterials had been opened, and my primary responsibility was to help establish the Cell Biology Laboratory there. I was the founding Director of this new facility and conducted research with a team developing polymeric biomaterials for various biomedical applications. Later on, a startup company was established to continue this work. I returned to Ghana in 2001 to start my professional life as a university lecturer.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I am an Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering. I was sad to find out last year that I was one of only three female professors of Engineering in Ghana at the time.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

Since February 1, 2018.

ELABORATE A BIT ON THE JOURNEY WHICH BROUGHT YOU HERE?

Many years of persistent hard work and a strong passion to contribute positively to STEM education.

I was recruited from the US by Prof. Ivan Addae-Mensah, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, to help start

a Faculty of Engineering. I started as a Lecturer in the Department of Physics in 2001. I was the first woman to be appointed as permanent, full-time faculty of the Department. I was promoted to the rank of Senior Lecturer in 2005.

Between 2001 and 2003, I was a member of the Planning Committee set up by the Academic Board of the University of Ghana to make proposals for establishing the Faculty of Engineering Sciences. As a member of this committee, my major contributions were the development of the 3rd and 4th year curricula for both the Biomedical Engineering and Materials Science & Engineering programmes. I was also a member of the three-person Implementation Committee set up by the Vice Chancellor following the submission and adoption of the Planning Committee's report. It is noteworthy that the University of Ghana's programme in Biomedical Engineering was the first in Ghana and most of sub-Saharan Africa.

I was appointed the first Head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering in 2006 and served as Head for several years (2006-2012, 2014-2016). As founding Head of the Department, I was responsible for staff recruitment as well as administrative and academic leadership of the fledgling unit. The period between 2006 and 2010 was characterised by heavy teaching loads (up to 6 courses per semester of undergraduate teaching) as there were only 2 full-time staff members at post. Although I thoroughly enjoyed teaching and was rewarded with the University's Best Teacher Award for the Sciences in 2009, the consistently burdensome responsibility had a toll on my research productivity, as indicated by a long break in my publication record and a long delay in my promotion to professorial rank.



WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR ROLE?

TEACHING: I teach courses in (Biomedical) Engineering (Engineering Design, Biomaterials, Tissue Engineering, Regenerative Engineering, Biomechanics, Materials Science, Haemodynamics, Physics, etc.) to both graduate and undergraduate students. Throughout my career, I have taught students of Biomedical Engineering, Orthotics & Prosthetics, Dentistry, Physiotherapy, Radiography, Medical Physics and Physics. I also supervise numerous undergraduate and graduate student projects.

RESEARCH: I promote my discipline by conducting research with my colleagues and students. We have been exploring local materials (cassava fibre, pineapple leaf fibre, snail shells and clay) for potential use as biomaterials. We have also designed medical devices and produced prototypes that address various problems in healthcare, particularly maternal health.

SERVICE: I serve on many university, national and international committees. I served for four years on the University of Ghana's Governing Council and currently serving on the Governing Council of the Ghana Communication Technology University. I also sit on the Board of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission, the Governing Councils of the Ghana Institution of Engineering and the Institute of Project Management Professionals—Ghana (IPMP). I am President of Women in Projects (WiP, the women's wing of IPMP) and a member of the Scientific Programmes Committee of the Next Einstein Forum (NEF). I spend a considerable amount of time developing new programmes and courses (for example, I am the Founding Head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Ghana and the Founding Head of the Department of Orthotics and Prosthetics at the University of Health and Allied Sciences). I also mentor a large number of people. In addition to all this, I

am probably best known for my role, since 2006, as the Quiz mistress/host of the National Science and Maths Quiz.

ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

All my activities are demanding. I have to be extremely well-organized to deliver excellence in all my responsibilities. I also have little to no funding for research, and a lack of laboratory facilities for an experimentalist like me is nothing short of frustrating. It helps that I enjoy what I do.

DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

Yes. The opportunity for continued learning from my interactions with the brilliant young people I meet every day and the occasional possibility of “whispering into the ears” of highly-placed individuals who have the wherewithal to change our society for the better.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE NSMQ? HOW HAS THE JOURNEY BEEN? HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED AMIDST FAME OR POPULARITY?

In 2005, I was nominated to join the NSMQ consulting team by my Head of Department, Prof. Oduro-Afriyie, who was the Physics Consultant on the programme at the time.

It has been a good experience and an opportunity to prioritize, popularize and make science less intimidating. In some years, consultants of the programme have successfully directed the teaching and learning of concepts by emphasizing them in the quiz. Many

young people have chosen to study science and are excelling in STEM careers because they were positively influenced by the NSMQ. The programme has also projected my contributions to STEM education into the limelight.

I am still the very purposeful person who was working to make a positive impact in STEM education even when I was not in the limelight. I make it a point to remember my background and regularly reflect on my goals. I am honoured by the “popularity”, but I am also fully aware that I have a lot more to contribute and the knowledge that I still have more to learn keeps me humble.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

Definitely my parents and a few other teachers, especially my late Headmistress (Aburi Girls' Secondary School), Mrs. Joyce Asibey.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I am a Charter Member and Past President of the Legon Lions Club.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

It's not easy, but I make a conscious effort to spend time with family and friends. I schedule my social interactions, and my children (I have 3) know that I will prioritize them over any activity on any day.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

Reading, traveling, listening to music (especially Classical Music).

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

Keep doing what you're doing and enjoy the journey...the future is so bright!

ANY FINAL WORDS

Let me share my favourite quote:

“

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

–Ralph Waldo Emerson

“



MARIAN BORKOR

Nestle Ghana Ltd.
Regional Sales Manager (Eastern Volta)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (GROWING UP, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION)

I was born at Ho in the Volta Region but grew up mainly in Sefwi Wiawso and Kumasi where I had my primary education. I moved to Cape Coast where I had my Junior (OLA Boarding School - 2000) and Senior Secondary School (Holy Child School - 2003). I continued to University to Cape Coast (2008) for my first degree and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (2014) where I had my MBA in International Business. I am currently doing my PhD in Business & Management (Technology Entrepreneurship) in KNUST School of Business with the Marketing and Corporate Strategy Department.

WHEN AND WHERE DID YOU START YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

After National Service, I worked at Green Roof Hotel (Sefwi Bekwai) as the Manager, then moved to Logs & Lumber Limited (Kumasi), A Free Zones Timber Manufacturing Firm (2010-2014) as the Export Officer then later Import Manager. I had the opportunity to lecture on part-time basis at KNUST School of Business with the Marketing & Corporate Strategy Department (2015 to 2017) and currently in same role with the Institute of Distance Learning (IDL Accra & Kumasi campus). I was one out of three females to make it to the Nestle Management Trainee Programme in 2016. I am currently the Regional Sales Manager for the Eastern Volta Region.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

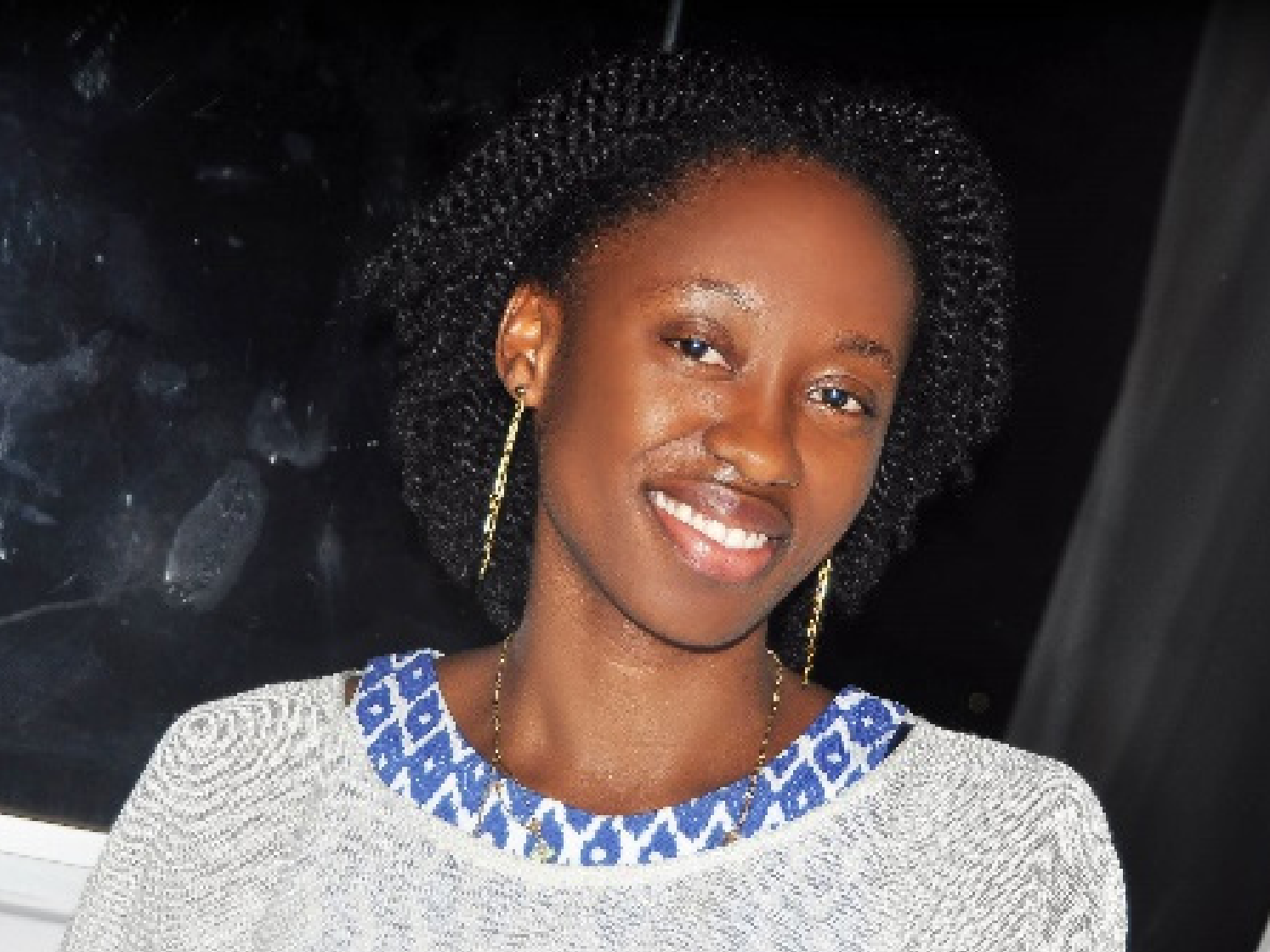
I am the Regional Sales Manager for the Eastern Volta Region in Nestlé Ghana Ltd.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HELD THIS POSITION?

I have been in this position since August 2021.

ELABORATE A BIT ON THE JOURNEY WHICH BROUGHT YOU HERE?

A Lecturer at KNUST Business School (Lawyer Samuel Yaw Akomea) told me about the Management Trainee Programme at Nestle that it will be a good fit for me. I applied and after a rigorous recruitment process that lasted for six months, I was one of three ladies who got the opportunity to be taken on. I spent the first year in Sales where I had to learn the rudiments of Distribution and Field Sales. After



that I spent 8 months with the Marketing Department (Nutrition Team). Afterwards I was confirmed as an Area Sales Manager with Accra Area 1, then to Ashanti Region in same capacity. I was promoted to the Regional Sales Manager position in 2021.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR POSITION?

I am the single point of contact for all Sales Operations related aspects (e.g. Field Sales, Distributors, etc.) within the Eastern and Volta Regional Area and deliver agreed objectives/targets.

Responsible for setting objectives, leading negotiation process and daily monitoring

of customer's performance against defined KPIs, implementing, following up and updating Field Sales Plan.

Ensure the execution of the Channel & Category plans at the Point of Purchase and support the development of Field Sales, Category and Channel Plans by providing feedback on the Cycle plan activities execution.

Responsible to provide quality and on-time information on demand forecast by customer, report on market dynamics, competitor activities.

Ensure adherence to all Company principles and policies.

Ensure development of careers, succession plans, development and coaching of direct reports.

ANY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

Being a female in a male dominated field has not been easy but I have been able to convert these challenges and harnessed them into strengths to my benefit.

DOES YOUR CURRENT ROLE COME WITH ANY PERKS OR PRIVILEGES?

I have a new pickup which is the official vehicle I use as a working tool. I have an official phone with data and call time to facilitate my work. The position comes with its own privileges.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS OR GREATEST INFLUENCERS WHILE GROWING UP?

The resilience of my mother raising

two girls to become a Lawyer & a Sales Manager as a single mother always propels me to keep going and never let any challenge become a limitation. Great Women in the Bible like Esther, Ruth and Mary have been a great influence to me.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN APART FROM WORK?

I am part of a christian fellowship (PMWF) which I am actively involved in. I am the president of my Old School Union (HOPSA 2003). A Mentor/ Resource Person for the Kuffour Scholars Programme, Yali West Africa and to some selected KNUST Students.

HOW DO YOU FIND WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Managing family-work-academics and other areas of my life has not been easy



but mastering the skill of effective time management, multitasking and dovetailing helps to make it easy. My husband Bernard Teschmaker Quayson gives me all the support I need.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND, ANY HOBBIES?

I love to listen to Godly music and watch Christian inspired movies.

ADVICE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

Time is a resource we cannot get back ones it is spent. We must learn to use our time judiciously to get the best value out of it. Identify people who can inspire you to aspire for the top.





ANY FINAL WORDS?


I would not be where I am if not for the grace of God. He has been a strong support system for me through the difficult times and continues to be my anchor. Make Him your anchor and you can be assured at arriving at your predestined destination without fail.





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