

ACCELERATING BLACK LEADERSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ABLE) USA

Pitch Day & Graduation



Serge Amouzou
CEO & Founder,
Datafiks



Samuel Baddoo
CEO,
Fleri



Christopher Bennett
Founder/Attorney,
T-I-L(R) Technology-
Innovation-Law



Akinsola Jegede
CEO, Vital Swap
Technologies



Tyrell Junius
Co-Founder &
COO, Tami
Networks



Rhode Maliver
CEO, K-12 Preparatory
Academy



Bobola Odebiyi
Founder & CEO,
CrossKudi



Sarah Odiavbara
Chief Technology
Officer, Craftmerce
.inc.



Omolola Omishore
CEO,
TheraMotive



Clement Owusu-
Donkor
Founder & CEO,
Aquantus



Shingai Samudzi
Founder & CEO,
Asaba



Lead Organization



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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am delighted to extend to you an invitation to the upcoming 3rd annual Accelerating Black Leadership and Entrepreneurship 2023 (**ABLE 2023**) Pitch Day, taking place on October 26th at the Leavey School of Business at Santa Clara University and virtually. The ABLE program serves as an enterprise accelerator, developed to empower, and uplift small businesses and nonprofit organizations led by Black entrepreneurs across the United States. Special thanks to our Academic partners at the Silicon Valley Executive Center (**SVEC**) at Santa Clara University.

Black entrepreneurs bring a wealth of unique perspectives and fresh problem-solving approaches to the forefront, resulting in a surge of innovation across products, services, and business models. Investing in Black entrepreneurs is not just pivotal; it's a fundamental step toward unlocking enhanced economic opportunities and business growth for everyone.



The stories of Black entrepreneurs who have defied the odds continue to serve as a wellspring of inspiration for future generations. Figures like [Madam C.J. Walker](#), the pioneering black female millionaire and trailblazer in hair care products, and [Charley Moore](#), the legal-tech innovator and founder of [Rocket Lawyer](#), remain beacons of inspiration for Black innovation and entrepreneurship. Below, we will **spotlight success stories from our own ABLE cohorts**, showcasing their remarkable journeys.

Why is investing in Black Entrepreneurs strategic and smart? There are several compelling reasons of which some include:

- **Economic Growth:** Black entrepreneurs contribute significantly to the nation's economic growth. By supporting Black-owned businesses, you stimulate economic activity, create jobs, and generate tax revenue. A thriving business community leads to a stronger economy.
- **Innovation:** Black entrepreneurs bring unique perspectives and innovative ideas to the business world. Their experiences and backgrounds often lead to fresh approaches to problem-solving and the development of new products, services, and business models that can benefit society at large.
- **Job Creation:** Startups and small businesses, which are often founded by Black entrepreneurs, are major sources of job creation. Supporting Black-owned businesses helps reduce unemployment and boost economic prosperity, particularly in underserved communities.



ABLE 23 Pitch Day is your opportunity to bear witness to the sheer innovation, tenacity, and resilience exhibited by Black entrepreneurs who are rewriting the rules and pushing the boundaries of financial equity. Your attendance and support for the ABLE entrepreneurs is key to the future of a more inclusive and prosperous world.

The ABLE program is possible thanks to the funding from **BILL, Makahakama Foundation, KLA Foundation, Santa Clara County**, and many others. Your commitment to advancing the cause is our inspiration.

Join us at the ABLE 2023 hybrid Pitch Day on October 26th at 8:30 AM PDT. Register [here](#) to join us virtually. For funders, investors, and press who want to attend in-person, please email Brett Cave at brett@africandiasporanetwork.org. The in-person event will take place at Santa Clara University in Santa Clara, CA.

As always, thank you and we are looking forward to seeing you.

Warm regards,

Almaz Negash
Founder and Executive Director,
African Diaspora Network

Meet the ABLE 3 Cohort

ABLE Alumni Stories of Success

At African Diaspora Network, we're proud to showcase the achievements of entrepreneurs who've gone through our Accelerating Black Leadership and Entrepreneurship (ABLE) program. Our program has nurtured exceptional talent, and the

success stories of ABLE alumni speak volumes about the impact of investing in Black entrepreneurs. Read more about their stories below.

Kristal Hansley
Founder & CEO, WeSolar



Kristal Hansley is the Founder & CEO of [WeSolar, Inc](#) and is the nation's first Black Woman CEO in the community solar industry. Under her leadership, WeSolar is growing quickly, providing consumers across Maryland access to affordable solar energy, regardless of home type and helping hard-working families reduce monthly expenses. Through WeSolar, electricity consumers can purchase shared solar from a local project without having to install any equipment in their homes. In turn, residents save hundreds on their electricity bills. Kristal and her team are disrupters who advocate that communities of color and low-income communities be included in this shift and have a healthy environment in the future.

Jody T. Mitchell
Founder and CEO, Directed Analytics

Mr. Mitchell is the founder & CEO of [Directed Analytics](#) where he has led the development of the company's framework & software, 4SightGPS. Under Mr. Mitchell's leadership, Directed Analytics has accomplished education software, and local government and commercial professional services experience. Mr. Mitchell's company is currently working to introduce its software to the education marketplace and is conducting business development activities to enter into the federal government. Mr. Mitchell led the development of a National Science Foundation R&D effort for improving educational outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, for which his company was awarded funding in August 2022.



Akissi Stokes
CEO & Co-Founder, WUNDERgrubs



Akissi Stokes never thought growing up on her grandfather's farm would now become her life's mission. Except she traded in cows for insects. She believes the sustainable farming of insects, leveraged with technology, unlocks the potential to help us regenerate natural resources, alleviate waste from landfills, and reimagine more resilient food systems. [WUNDERgrubs](#) was founded to empower people to live healthier lives by changing the way the world understands protein. WUNDERgrubs provides easy and convenient food products, plus helpful recipes, tools and resources to make an edible insect-based lifestyle easy and enjoyable.

Meet the 2023 ABLE Cohort



Serge Amouzou
CEO & Founder, Datatrixs

Serge Amouzou is the CEO and Founder of Datatrixs, which empowers accounting firms with continuous client advisory services. Serge previously founded a FinTech company aimed at helping service workers earn more net income and was named BBJ CEO of the Year Award recipient in 2017.



Samuel Baddoo
CEO, Fleri

Sam Baddoo, founder and CEO of Fleri, grew up in Accra, Ghana, and left for Morocco at age 18 on a United Nations scholarship. His varied experiences with migration shaped his views on Pan-Africanism, immigration, and entrepreneurship, and ultimately inspired him to start Fleri, a membership-based platform for global migrants to support their loved ones back home, as an alternative to cash transfers. Sam is a serial entrepreneur and an active reservist in the United States Army. He is a Harambean, a NASDAQ Milestone Maker, and a Techstars Toronto Alumni.



Christopher Bennett
Founder/ Attorney, T-I-L(R)

Christopher "Chris" Bennett, JD, MBA, CPM is the founder of T-I-L(R), a social impact law and legal technology startup, working to make intellectual property rights more accessible to the underrepresented. His law and technology work includes startups, SMEs, and enterprise size organizations. Chris has graduate degrees from Georgetown (JD), Penn (MBA), a BA in education from Morehead State University / Johnson C. Smith University, and professional certifications in Blockchain, Data Science, Energy Innovation & Emerging Technologies, and Six-Sigma, and is a Certified Public Manager and Intellectual Property Law Attorney.



Akinsola Jegede
CEO, Vital Swap Technologies

Akinsola is the technical founder of VitalSwap, bringing over 7 years of experience in developing technical solutions for multinational US corporations such as Salesforce, AT&T, and StateFarm. As an immigrant from Africa, Akinsola personally encountered the challenges of international payments, the very issue that VitalSwap is passionately committed to addressing. With expertise as a seasoned systems architect and entrepreneur, Akinsola's journey fuels his dedication to creating innovative solutions for global financial accessibility.



Tyrell Junius
Co-Founder & COO, Tiami Networks

Tyrell served as an Associate Director at the Atlantic Council's Africa Center, and subsequently ventured into the entrepreneurial realm, co-founding Tiami Networks, where he is the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Under his stewardship, Tiami Networks is playing a vital role in connecting remote and underserved areas with reliable connectivity, fostering an environment of digital inclusion. Tyrell is synonymous with social impact and community upliftment and is a seasoned professional with a strong dedication to humanitarian efforts.



Rhode Malivert

CEO, K-12 Preparatory Academy

Hailing from Haiti, Rhode journeyed to the United States at the age of 12. Commencing her professional career as a Chemical Engineer, Rhode's aspiration was to catalyze positive transformations in people's lives. Following a span of 14 years in the corporate realm, her entrepreneurial spirit birthed the genesis of K-12 Preparatory Academy that focuses on the educational empowerment of learners.

K-12 Preparatory Academy has extended its reach to distressed corners of the globe, collaborating with organizations in Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Poland.



Bobola Odebiyi

Founder & CEO, CrossKudi

Bobola Odebiyi, is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and the founder & CEO of CrossKudi. Bobola began his career as a taxi driver in Chicago before working his way up to becoming a CPA. Bobola has provided tax consulting services to hedge fund and private equity clients at Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) and co-led the PwC global Blockchain Community of Interest that trained colleagues on implementing emerging technologies to serve clients better.

As an immigrant himself, Bobola fully understands the challenges that the 47 million US immigrant population experiences financially, which is the target audience of CrossKudi.



Sarah Odiavbara

Chief Technology Officer, Craftmerce, Inc.

Sarah Odiavbara is an experienced full-stack developer with experience in creating and building e-commerce web platforms. She is the CTO of Craftmerce, an online marketplace platform that connects African handmade brands with global buyers and international retail stores. She has worked and helped grow companies that have raised over \$1M in revenues. She is dedicated to building world-class modern web applications and crafting high-performance web experiences for customers.



Omolola Omishore

CEO, TheraMotive

Lola Omishore, founder of TheraMotive, is a first-generation Nigerian-American Doctor of Physical Therapy based in NYC. With over 10 years of experience, she is an accomplished physical therapist, published research author, Board Certified Orthopedic Specialist, and Certified Athletic Trainer. She began her career treating elite athletes across the globe, providing 'healthcare on demand' and has worked with a diverse range of patients including Professional Athletes, Weekend Warriors, stroke survivors, infants, toddlers, and individuals from all walks of life. Now, she's bringing that same gold-medal-worthy care to everyone's corner, because access to top-notch healthcare isn't a privilege, it's a civil right.



Clement Owusu-Donkor

Founder & CEO, Aquantuo

Clement's extensive background in IT and telecommunications engineering has seen him work for decades in the telecommunications, payment processing, public utility and IT industries, providing leadership and support for critical backend infrastructure for several private and fortune 100 companies. Having been associated with logistics from infancy, Clement is currently the founder and Chief Servant at Aquantuo, an ecommerce, shipping and third party logistics company

where he partners with a dynamic team of 100 and counting across 9 countries and with strategic partnerships across the globe. He and the team at Aquantuo are on a mission to transform lives globally through efficient trade and logistics.



Shingi Samudzi
Founder & CEO, Asoba

I am a first generation American by way of Zimbabwe, obsessed with infrastructure. I have been in numerous strategy and data science roles within the energy, healthcare and tech industries, from companies like Kaiser Permanent to Google. As CEO and Co-Founder of Asoba, we are leveraging virtual power plant software to aggregate excess clean energy at the utility scale and provide on-demand electricity to retail buyers. Our commitment to clean energy is the passion behind our building Africa's largest private clean energy marketplace.

[Register Here](#)

Community News

Join the DOTS
Calling **ALL** diaspora organisations!

 **Take the survey!**



Diaspora leaders, have your voice heard in the development of a training toolkit specifically for diaspora organizations. In partnership with UNDP, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and DMA Global, IOM is planning to develop a diaspora training toolkit that will help diaspora organizations build their capacities across a variety of competencies. As a first step, they are surveying diaspora organizations to understand their needs and the major obstacles keeping them from achieving your goals.

[Take the Survey](#)

Support African Diaspora Network



Looking to have a more active role as a member of African Diaspora Network?

Learn more about ways to engage:

- Invite a friend to subscribe to our newsletter by sending them the link [here](#)
- Follow us on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#)
- Subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#)
- Give Through Silicon Valley Community Foundation ([SVCF](#)) Donor-advised fund
- Mentor entrepreneurs participating in our ABLE and/or BAF programs. Contact Brett Cave, Entrepreneurship Programs Manager at brett@africandiasporanetwork.org to learn more.
- Be an organizational sponsor and support the African Diaspora Network to bring together diverse people from around the world to collaborate and work together. Support ADN [HERE](#)
- Fill out the ADN Engagement form [here](#).

Engagement Opportunities

A Special Thank You to Our Funders

See full list [here](#).



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