

ACCELERATING BLACK LEADERSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ABLE) United States



The Buzz The Latest News in Accelerating Black Leaders

Unlocking Potential: ABLE Quarterly Newsletter

Greetings from the heart of the Accelerating Black Leadership and Entrepreneurship (ABLE) Program! We are thrilled to bring you the latest edition of our quarterly newsletter, "The Buzz" filled with exciting updates, inspiring success stories, and a glimpse into the transformative journey of our remarkable entrepreneurs.

In this edition, we shine a spotlight on the extraordinary accomplishments of our third cohort. These 11 trailblazing entrepreneurs are not only graduating but are poised to make a significant impact on the entrepreneurial landscape. Join us as we celebrate their achievements and innovation through a recap of their pitch day and graduation.

But that's not all! We'll also share updates and success stories from our previous cohorts, highlighting the continued growth and achievements of the ABLE community. The ripple effect of their endeavors is creating a legacy of empowerment.

Stay in the loop with our upcoming events: From workshops to networking opportunities, we have a lineup of engaging activities designed to foster connection, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing. Be sure to save the dates!

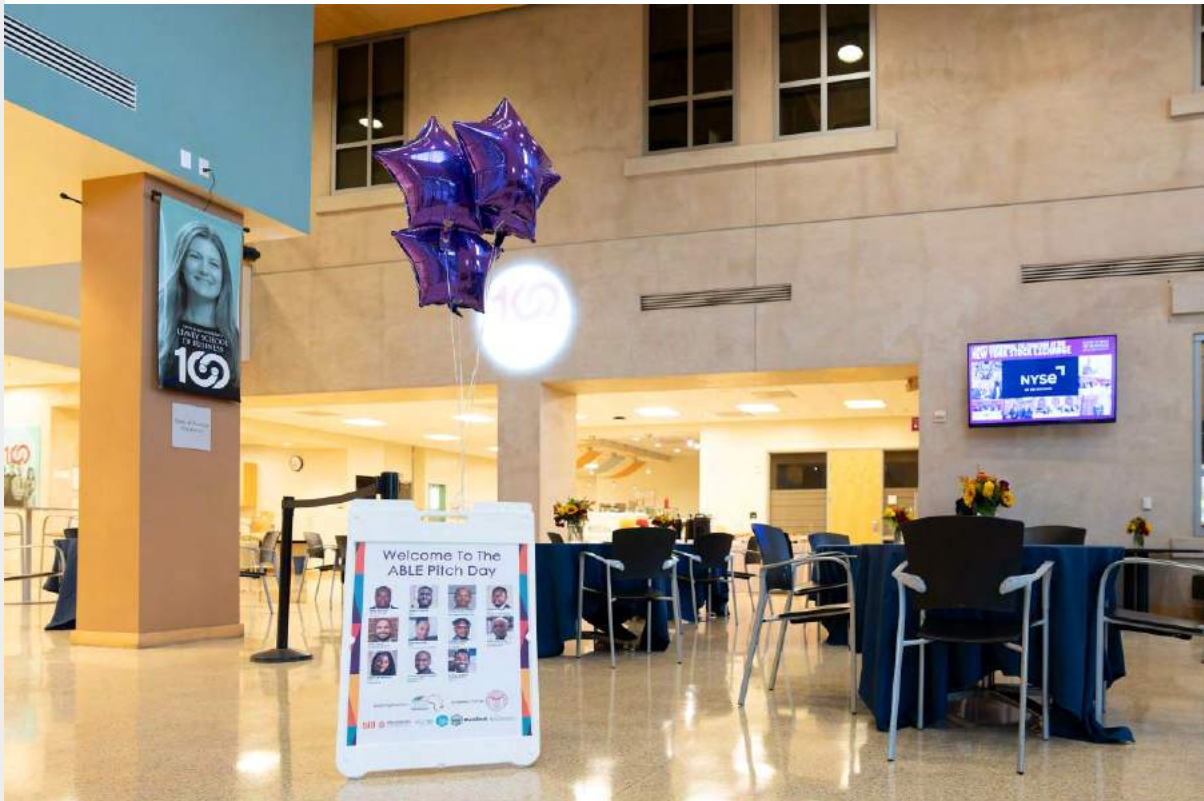


With so many exciting developments in the ABLE program, now is the perfect time to get and stay connected, and Explore how you can contribute to our mission of empowering Black founders and fostering inclusive entrepreneurship.

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible ecosystem and funders who make the ABLE program possible. Your support is the bedrock of our success. Special thanks to BILL, Makahakama Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, CA Black Freedom Fund, The County of Santa Clara, and The KLA Foundation for believing in our mission.

As we navigate this journey of empowerment together, let's continue to build bridges, break barriers, and create lasting impact. Thank you for being an integral part of the ABLE community. Dive in!

Pitch Day Highlights



The echoes of excitement still linger as we reflect on the monumental event that was ABLE Pitch Day. On October 26, 2023 at Santa Clara University, We came together to celebrate the graduation of our third cohort, and what a showcase it was for the 11 dynamic entrepreneurs who took center stage to unveil their groundbreaking ventures.

- Almaz Negash, ADN Founder Executive Director
- Dennis Lanham, Sr. Assistant Dean of Executive Education and Executive Director of Silicon Valley Executive Center, Santa Clara University,
- Dr. Julie Sullivan, President Santa Clara University who shared opening program remarks
- Raj Aji, ADN Board Member and General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, BILL.com
- René Lacerte, CEO and Founder of BILL.com who shared welcoming and congratulatory remarks
- Lisha Bell, Co-Founder, BLXVC shared an informative keynote
- Joyce Chung, President of Makahakama Foundation who closed out the inspiring event with a financial gift of 10K for each cohort member

ABLE Pitch Day was more than just an event; it was an opportunity for our community to connect with like-minded individuals, industry experts, and potential collaborators. As we celebrated the journey of our entrepreneurs, the event served as a reminder of the power of community and innovation in shaping a more inclusive entrepreneurial landscape.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us, supported our entrepreneurs, and contributed to the success of this transformative event.

ABLE Spotlight

Stories from Alumni

In the spirit of celebrating our remarkable ABLE Alumni, we are truly honored to witness the incredible journeys they are embarking on. Each member of our alumni community is making significant strides in their respective fields, and we are immensely proud to be a part of their success stories. Here are just a few highlights of the extraordinary achievements that some of our ABLE Alumni have accomplished.

Cohort 1

Shasha Jumbe

CEO & Co-Founder of Level 42 AI

[Shasha Jumbe](#), Inaugural ABLE Cohort Alumni and CEO & Co-Founder of Level 42 AI, announced winning a CAI Global Health Innovation award in August.

Level 41 AI is a digital health company pioneering collection and interpretation of acoustic signatures using generative artificial intelligence (AI) for better respiratory health and earlier detection of lung diseases, including cancers. Learn more about the award and Shasha's work [here](#).

Congratulations Shasha – Continue “leveling up” the impact of your important life changing work!

[Learn More](#)



Cohort 2

Emmanuel Brown

CEO and Co Founder of Churchspace

Emmanuel Brown, CEO and Co Founder of Churchspace and ABLE 2 Alum, has some exciting news.

Churchspace is a unique platform that allows patrons to use Faith-based facilities during non-church hours. To get a sneak peak of the platform, click [here](#).

The grand public launch of the Churchspace platform was Monday, November 27th. You can access the platform [here](#).

We are so proud of your continued success.

[Learn More](#)



Cohort 3

Christopher Bennett

CEO and Founder of T-I-L Technology
Information Law Group

We are thrilled to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Christopher Bennett, CEO and Founder of T-I-L Technology Information Law Group, and a distinguished member of ABLE Cohort 3, on his remarkable achievement!

We are excited to share that Christopher Bennett, a recent ABLE Cohort 3 graduate, has been recognized as one of the 10 esteemed awardees of the 2nd round of grants from Washington D.C. Mayor's [Inclusive Innovation Equity Impact Fund](#). This prestigious acknowledgment comes as a testament to his unwavering commitment, exceptional innovation, and dedication to driving meaningful impact in the tech and innovation sector.

We are proud of this well-deserved recognition.

[Learn More](#)



Cohort 3

Dr. Omolola Omishore

CEO and Founder of Theramotive

Cohort 3 Alum, CEO and Founder of Theramotive, Dr. Omolola Omishore (Dr. Lola) was recently featured by the prestigious [Tech:NYC](#) as a "Tech Company to Watch! As an alum, Dr. Lola and health-tech influencer, Dr. Lola shares her thoughts on the ABLE program. "During my time with ABLE, what resonated with me most profoundly was the caliber of the program's founders. I found myself in the company of dedicated professionals from diverse fields - engineers, lawyers, accountants, doctors, and even military veterans who had devoted their lives to national service. I look back at our group photo in Silicon Valley every day and think to myself, "Every last one of us will be millionaires in the next 5 years". Of course, with opportunity, also comes responsibility. I firmly believe our duty as Black entrepreneurs is to lift up fellow entrepreneurs of color as we ascend the startup ladder.

To that end, I'm creating a peer-to-peer "FounderFund" inspired by the crowdfunding model for us to invest in each other's ventures, instead of solely relying on external investors. This fund will be unique in that it will be driven by founders investing in the



entrepreneurial journeys of our peers. My lesson during my time with ABLE is clear: success is not just measured by personal achievement, but by the doors it opens for others to succeed.”

With the innovation and continued impact of TheraMotive, Dr. Lola is certainly opening doors of her own.

[Learn More](#)

Cohort 3

Shingai Samudzi

CEO and Founder of Asoba

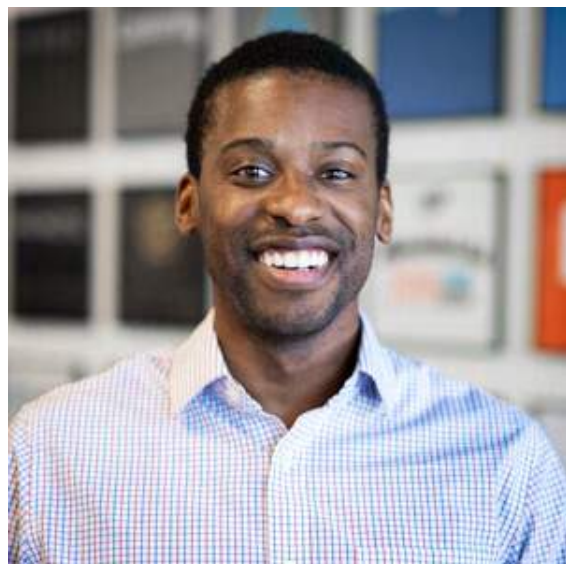
Shingai Samudzi, CEO and Founder of Asoba, a pioneering renewable energy company, and a recent graduate of ABLE Cohort 3, is leaving a significant mark on the global stage.

Shingai had the incredible opportunity to showcase Asoba's innovative solutions in the regional [EDF \(French utility company\) Pulse Climate Tech Competition](#) in South Africa. We're excited to announce that Shingai took home the second-place prize, a testament to his dedication and the transformative potential of Asoba's mission.

At ABLE, we've witnessed Shingai's commitment to sustainability, clean energy, and making a positive impact on our environment. His recent achievement in the EDF competition serves as inspiration, showing that hard work, innovation, and a commitment to change can create a more sustainable and equitable future.

Congratulations, Shingai!

[Learn More](#)



Accelerating Acceptance: Tips to a Competitive Application

By Brett L. Cave

Entrepreneurship Programs Manager, African Diaspora Network



Thinking about applying for the next cohort of the ABLÉ business accelerator program? Crafting a compelling application is your key to unlocking the doors of opportunity. Here are some tips to ensure your submission stands out:

Clarity is Key: Clearly articulate your business idea, mission, and value proposition. Be concise and specific about what makes your venture unique and impactful.

Demonstrate Traction: Showcase any existing traction or milestones your business has achieved. This could include customer testimonials, partnerships, revenue growth, or other indicators of success.

Highlight Your Team: Introduce the driving force behind your venture – your team. Emphasize the skills, expertise, and passion that each team member brings to the table. A strong, cohesive team is a significant asset.

Make the Numbers Plain: Be sure clearly state your business financials. Demonstrating a clear understanding of your business landscape with projections and valuation if you have it, will help you stand out and show that you “know your stuff” as it relates to your businesses’ financial health and fosters confidence in reviewers who might be investors.

Showcase Your Vision: Clearly outline your long-term vision and how participation in the accelerator program aligns with your goals. This demonstrates that you are forward-thinking and strategic in your approach.

Quantify Impact: Where possible, quantify the impact of your business. Whether it's social, environmental, or economic impact, providing tangible metrics adds credibility to your application.

Craft an Engaging Pitch Deck: Although having a pitch deck is optional, you won't be able to stand out without one. Do your research, and find pitch deck templates that fit your style and convey your business message best. You can use resources like Canva and Fiver as well.

Follow Instructions: Pay close attention to application instructions and guidelines. Adhering to the specified format and word limits shows attention to detail and respect for the review process.

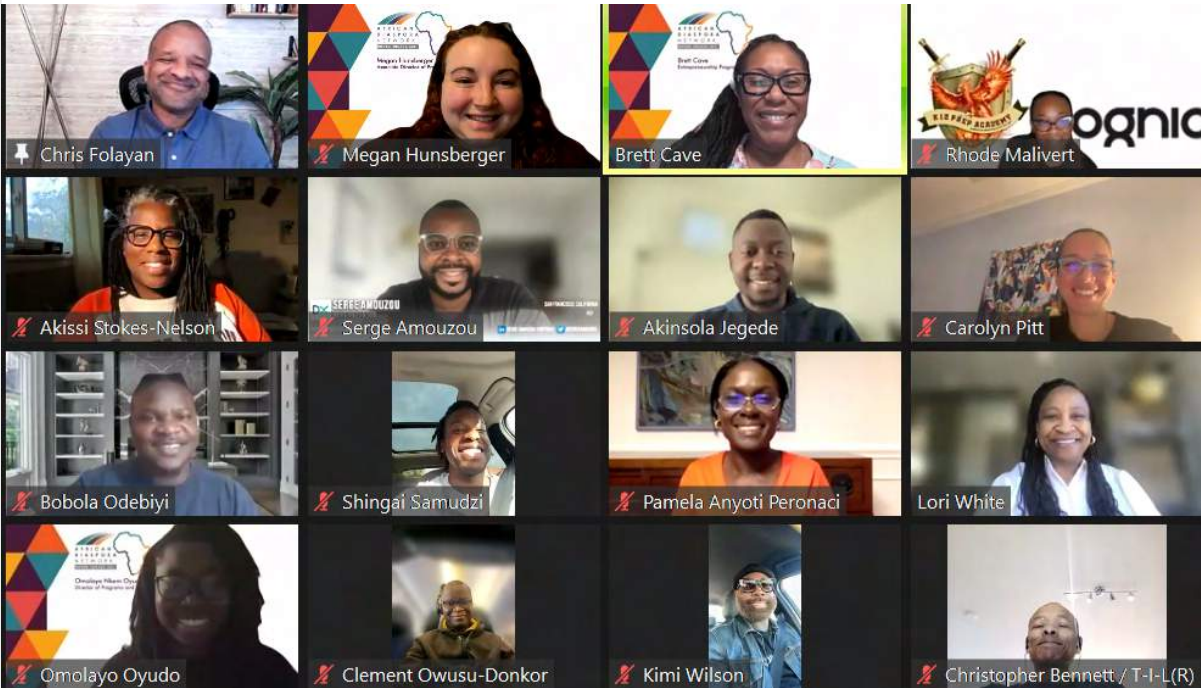
Remember, your application is an opportunity to tell your story and showcase the potential of your venture. Take the time to craft a thoughtful and compelling

submission that reflects the passion and innovation driving your business forward.

Good luck!

ABLE Community Events

Community Building & Networking Building Session with Global Strategist Chris Folayan



The ABLE Cohort 3 had its final professional development session on Sales & Marketing with [Chris Folayan](#).

We are so grateful for the salient advice he shared with us on expanding into new markets globally, covering key points such as:

- Exploring local payment methods in emerging markets
- Expand into regions that share the same language as you
- Understand local culture and respect local holidays
- Vetting potential partners present in the country you want to expand to
- Proving the viability of your product in a new market to potential funders
- and much more!

If you were not able to make it, you certainly missed a treat! Thank you, Chris for the words of wisdom where you shared, “Please try your very best to go global and expand as efficiently as you can. You never know what country wants your product or is going to use your product.”

We appreciate you!

Calling all ABLE Alums!



Get ready to mark your calendars because it's time for our first-ever ABLE Alumni Virtual Potluck and Homecoming, and we can't wait to reconnect with all of you!

Join us on **December 14th at 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM PDT** for a festive and informative session, filled with fun activities and enriching conversations. It's an opportunity to reconnect with familiar faces and meet new members of our growing ABLE alumni family.

This 1.5-hour gathering is all about sharing, connecting, and envisioning how the ABLE Alumni Community can best support you.

Why You Should Come:

We envision that the ABLE Alumni Community will solidify your position as a life long "ABLER." This Community will serve as a key part of connecting, networking and getting to know and support each other as peers in your entrepreneurial journey.

Register here to reserve your spot: [ABLE Alum Pot Luck & Homecoming Zoom Registration](#)

See you there!

[Register Here](#)

Ways to Engage



Mentor an Entrepreneur

If you are an entrepreneur, founder, professional or expert, who can share your time, talent and wisdom to a founder on their journey then, this the opportunity for you.

[Sign Up Here](#)

Nominate an Entrepreneur

Do you know someone who you think is the perfect fit for the ABLE program? Nominate a black founder by sharing the application or sending them our way.

Interested? Contact brett@africandiasporanetwork.org to get involved and sign up today!

Give to ABLE

We appreciate your time and talents! If you would like to also give your treasure, you can donate to the ABLE program by clicking the link below and selecting the ABLE program. Your tax deductible donation is greatly appreciated!

[Give to ABLE](#)

Thank you: A Heartfelt Thank You to Our ABLE Champions



In the spirit of gratitude, we extend our deepest thanks to our esteemed funders BILL, Makahakama Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, CA Black Freedom Fund, The County of Santa Clara, and The KLA Foundation. Your unwavering support is the bedrock of the Accelerating Black Leadership and Entrepreneurship (ABLE) program, propelling us forward to empower and uplift Black entrepreneurs.

To our academic partner, the Silicon Valley Executive Center, and our ecosystem partners, mentors, supporters, and friends of ABLE, your collaborative efforts and commitment to inclusivity have created a vibrant community where dreams flourish. With your continued support, we look forward to achieving even greater impact together.

A Note of Gratitude

Thank you to our funders and ecosystem partners!

ACCELERATING BLACK LEADERSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ABLE) United States



Lead
Organization



Academic
Partner



Funders



Ecosystem Partners



Create a Buzz

Wondering how to get involved, support the program, or learn more about ADN?" Learn more about our ways to engage in ABLE on our website and through the opportunities below. For more information, contact brett@africandiasporanetwork.org.

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African Diaspora Network
4701 Patrick Henry Drive
Building 25
Santa Clara, CA 95054
United States

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