



- 2025 AWARDEES -



Kingsley Joseph Ennin Kwesi Acheampong

is a Ghanaian music educator, researcher, and composer, currently pursuing a PhD in Music (Theory and Composition) at the University of Ghana. He holds an MPhil in Music from the University of Ghana and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Cape Coast. His academic work combines music theory, composition, choral practice, and music education, with a strong commitment to African-centred scholarship. His PhD research, *African Composers and Languages of Identity: Integrating Indigenous Ghanaian Musical Genres into Choral Art*, aligns closely with the University of Ghana's research priority in Creative Arts, Education and Communication. The study examines how Ghanaian composers integrate indigenous musical genres such as *Adowa*, *Kete*, *Agbadza*, *Asafo*, *Gabada*, *Sikiyi*, and *Kpanlogo* into contemporary choral compositions as expressions of cultural identity. Through musical analysis, narrative inquiry, and performance observation, the research explores creative, pedagogical, and performative strategies that support the recontextualisation of traditional forms within modern compositional frameworks. By addressing a gap in analytical studies on indigenous idioms in Ghanaian choral art music, the research contributes original, context-specific knowledge to African music scholarship. It also supports culturally responsive curriculum development and national efforts to decolonise music education, reinforcing the University's commitment to research with practical societal relevance. Beyond academia, Acheampong is an active composer, choral director, examiner, and published author. His academic aspiration is to advance African art music scholarship while contributing to education, cultural preservation, and interdisciplinary research within and beyond Ghana.



Dorcas Quaye

is a graduate researcher in Human Anatomy at the University of Ghana Medical School with an interdisciplinary background spanning midwifery, placental biology, and embryology. Her research journey is grounded in a strong commitment to improving maternal and fetal health, influenced by her early clinical experiences in midwifery. Dorcas received the University of Ghana Graduate Research Fund Award for her Master of Philosophy

thesis, which investigated the stereological disparities in the placental microarchitecture between early-onset and late-onset preeclamptic pregnancies. Using rigorous quantitative placental analysis, her work demonstrated distinct patterns of placental stress responses (syncytial knots, perivillous fibrin deposition) associated with early-onset and late-onset preeclampsia. Her thesis reinforced the central role of the placenta in pregnancy complications and highlighted how the timing of disease onset in preeclampsia reflects divergent biological mechanisms. Building on this foundation, she is currently conducting a follow-up placental genomics study to investigate the prevalent single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in the ACVR2A gene and their association with early- and late-onset preeclampsia among Ghanaian women. This work aims to bridge placental morphology with the genetic regulation of trophoblast function and early placental development. The project is anticipated to evolve into transcriptomic and proteomic analysis of the ACVR2A gene expression. Beyond primary research, Dorcas is actively involved in narrative, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses addressing placental and pregnancy-related disorders. She is collaborating with national and international research teams to synthesize global evidence and highlight gaps in underrepresented populations. Her long-term academic goal is to build a full-time career as an interdisciplinary reproductive scientist. She seeks to contribute to research that identifies the earliest biological determinants of pregnancy complications and translates these insights into strategies that improve maternal and fetal health globally.



Irene Adinorkie Okutu

is a registered nurse with six years of clinical experience and a student of the MPhil in Applied Epidemiology and Disease Control programme at the School of Public Health. Her professional journey includes providing nursing care to patients, alongside a growing expertise in public health, with a focus on disease surveillance, outbreak investigations, and research into public health events. She has an interest in non-communicable diseases, hence has been actively involved in breast and cervical cancer screening and health education initiatives aimed at enhancing early detection and community awareness. Her MPhil thesis, which forms the basis of her funded research project, focuses on non-communicable diseases, specifically investigating hypertension-mediated organ damage among long-distance drivers. Her research interests are in non-communicable disease prevention and the application of epidemiological methods to inform public health interventions. Irene aspires to contribute to the development of evidence-based policies that support effective disease prevention and control and to pursue a career in applied epidemiology. She is committed to improving health outcomes through the application of evidence-based interventions to address disease burdens, promote early detection, and support targeted interventions.



Mavis Yaa Konadu Agyemang

is a PhD researcher in Social Work at the University of Ghana with a strong academic and professional interest in disability studies, inclusive development, and social justice. Her scholarly work focuses on the intersections of disability, politics, extractive industries, gender, and climate change within the Ghanaian context. Her academic journey began with a Master's thesis titled *Gold Mining and Disability: Experiences of Persons with Physical Disabilities in the Obuasi Municipal Area*, which examined how gold mining activities shape the lived

experiences, livelihoods, and social inclusion of persons with physical disabilities. Building on this foundation, her PhD research—an award-winning project titled *The Participation of Persons with Physical Disabilities as Candidates in Ghanaian National Politics*—explores the factors influencing political participation among persons with physical disabilities, as well as the structural, social, and institutional barriers that impede their engagement as political candidates. Mavis's research is grounded in a commitment to amplifying marginalized voices and contributing evidence-based knowledge to policy, practice, and advocacy on disability inclusion. She is particularly interested in how political systems, governance structures, and environmental changes affect the rights and agency of persons with disabilities. She aspires to pursue an academic career as a lecturer and researcher, contributing to teaching, mentorship, and impactful scholarship that advances inclusive policies and promotes equitable participation for persons with disabilities in Ghana and beyond.



Philip Owusu Banahene

is currently an MPhil graduate student in Applied Parasitology at the Department of Animal Biology and Conservation Science, University of Ghana, specializing in infectious diseases at the critical intersection of humans, animals, and the environment. His research focuses on the epidemiology, molecular characterization, and public health implications of zoonotic helminths and protozoan parasites affecting human, domestic, and wildlife populations. Driven by a strong commitment to the One Health approach, Philip is currently leveraging molecular and phylogenetic tools to explore parasite diversity, transmission dynamics, and zoonotic potential. His goal is to generate actionable evidence that guides surveillance and control strategies for neglected tropical diseases and other zoonoses in sub-Saharan Africa. Currently, Philip's research, which is funded by the University of Ghana Graduate Research Fund partly and the Oduro Laboratories, examines the molecular characterization of enteric helminths across human, domestic, and wildlife hosts in Ghana. By integrating classical parasitological techniques with DNA extraction, PCR, sequencing, and phylogenetic analysis, my research provides critical insights into zoonotic linkages, genetic diversity, and disease surveillance strategies. Philip aspires to pursue doctoral training in Global Health or a related biomedical field, with the long-term vision of leading impactful research programs that develop integrated One Health interventions, strengthen research capacity in

parasitology, and mentor the next generation of scientists dedicated to reducing the burden of parasitic and zoonotic infections in Africa.



Phoebe Ackah-Blay

is a Senior Medical Laboratory Scientist and final-year MPhil candidate in Chemical Pathology at the University of Ghana Medical School, with nearly a decade of experience in clinical diagnostics, laboratory research, and quality management systems. She is based at the Central Laboratory of the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Ghana's premier tertiary and referral health facility, where she contributes to routine diagnostics, research support, and mentorship of

junior laboratory professionals. Her MPhil thesis, "*The caspase dependent or independent apoptotic inducing factor in prostatic atrophy by Croton membranaceus root extract,*" was supported by the University of Ghana Graduate Research Fund (UG RID). Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is a common condition involving the enlargement of the prostate among older Ghanaian men; population research in Accra has shown that *about 62%* of men aged 50-74 have an enlarged prostate on clinical examination, and approximately *20%* report moderate-to-severe lower urinary tract symptoms associated with the condition. The study investigates the cellular pathways through which a widely used indigenous medicinal plant (*C. membranaceus*) for BPH management induces apoptosis and shrinks the prostate tissue, providing mechanistic evidence to support its efficacy and rational use in the disease management. Her broader research interests include studies in chemical pathology, neurology, and translational laboratory research that bridges experimental findings with clinical practice and population health impact. Phoebe aims to pursue advanced training in neuroscience and related interdisciplinary fields to explore molecular mechanisms underlying neurological disorders and to translate laboratory discoveries into improved diagnostics and therapies while strengthening research and teaching capacity in her field.



Sabina Ekua Andam

is a Medical Laboratory Scientist and PhD candidate in Biochemistry with research interests in molecular and translational cancer biology. Her work focuses on the genetic, epigenetic, and environmental determinants of oncogenic signaling pathways in breast cancer. Sabina is one of the recipients of the maiden **University of Ghana Graduate Research Fund (UGGRF)** award for her study entitled *"Investigation of C-CBL Gene Status, microRNA Dysregulation, and Environmental Risk Factors as Determinants of EGFR Overexpression in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer."* Her research integrates molecular genetics, microRNA profiling, and environmental risk assessment to elucidate mechanisms underlying EGFR overexpression and aggressive tumour phenotypes in triple-negative breast cancer. Sabina has a special interest in dysregulation of ubiquitin-mediated signaling pathways and gene-environment interactions in cancer progression. Her long-term objective is to establish a career as an independent cancer biologist, contributing to biomarker discovery and targeted therapeutic strategies, with an emphasis on cancer disparities and understudied African populations

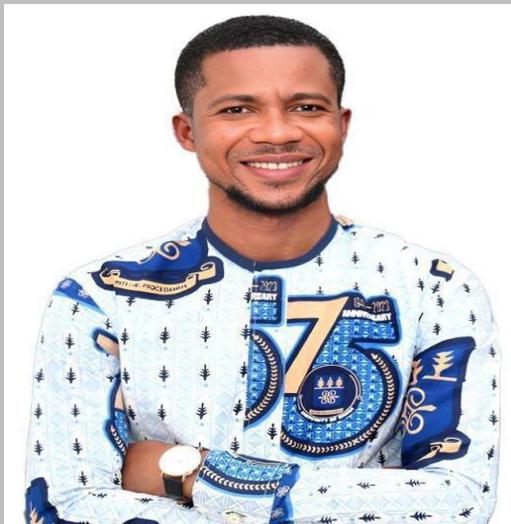


Stephen Anto Prah

is an agricultural scientist with strong expertise in plant and soilborne disease diagnosis, and integrated disease management. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Agriculture from the University of Cape Coast and is currently pursuing an MPhil in Crop Science (Plant Pathology option) at the University of Ghana. Since 2019, he has worked with the Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, where he supports crop protection activities, disease surveillance, and farmer advisory services across diverse production

systems. He has received several academic and research distinctions. He was awarded the Overall Best Graduating Student in Dissertation (Crop Science) by the School of Agriculture, University of Cape Coast, at its 48th Annual Congregation in 2015. He is also a recipient of the A.G. Leventis Scholarship Foundation Award for the 2024/2025 academic year and the maiden University of Ghana Graduate Research Fund for the 2025/2026 academic year.

His research interests focus on host–plant pathogen interactions, molecular characterization of plant pathogens, and the application of integrated, sustainable, and environmentally sound management strategies for nematode and fungal diseases affecting economically important crops. He has particular research experience in *Fusarium* wilt, root-knot nematodes, and their synergistic interactions in horticultural crops such as tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum* L.), with emphasis on improving productivity under tropical farming systems. His award-winning research project, supported by the University of Ghana Graduate Research Fund, is titled “Molecular characterization, pathogenicity, and management of *Fusarium* wilt–root-knot nematode disease complex in Ghana.” The study seeks to investigate the genetic diversity and pathogenic behavior of *Fusarium oxysporum* in association with *Meloidogyne* species and to develop effective, sustainable management options adaptable to local farming conditions. He aspires to pursue doctoral research and contribute to policy-relevant plant pathology research that supports sustainable agriculture and food security in Ghana and beyond Africa.



Wonder A. Doku-Agama

is a medical Laboratory scientist and an emerging biomedical scientist/ researcher with advanced training in Chemical Pathology with a focus on molecular diagnostics, clinical biochemistry, and neurodegenerative disease research. He is currently pursuing an MPhil in chemical pathology at the University of Ghana Medical School. He holds a BTech in Medical Laboratory Science, a BTech in Science Laboratory Technology (clinical chemistry option), and an HND in Science Laboratory Technology from Accra Technical University. His work integrates laboratory science with clinically relevant research, with a focus on genetic susceptibility, biochemical biomarkers, and disease risk patterns in African populations. Wonder’s award-winning master’s research on single nucleotide polymorphisms in the **apolipoprotein E gene and biochemical risk factors in the sporadic onset of Alzheimer’s disease in Ghanaians** examines how genetic variants interact with lipid and metabolic markers to influence disease risk. The data from this work

would contribute to unraveling some of the unknown variables contributing to the genomics of dementia in Africa. In the past few years, he supported research in pharmacogenetics, sickle cell disease biomarkers, and renal toxicity in HIV treatment, demonstrating his desire to work on improving diagnostics and patient care in resource-limited settings such as Ghanaian society. Wonder aspires to pursue a PhD in neurogenetics, neuroscience, or chemical pathology, with the goal of advancing biomarker discovery, strengthening molecular diagnostic capacity, and translating research into policies that improve health outcomes in Ghana and across Africa and the world at large. He also aspires to mentor young scientists.