

# Ghana Through the Eyes of An Black American Social Worker

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## GLOBAL FIELD AGENCY

My Global field agency was with Child Family Health International (CFHI). CFHI is a non-profit agency that provides global health education programs for college students. The mission statement of CHFI states that they offer community-based global health education programs for students and institutions. Their unique model fosters reciprocal partnerships and empowerment in local communities, transforming perspectives about self, healing and global.

## LOCATION

In Ghana, I was in two locations. The first location I was in was Cape Coast, Ghana which has a population of about 800,000 people. Their primary sources of income are agriculture and fishing. The second location I was in was Accra, Ghana. Accra has a population of upwards of 2,000,000 people and is the capital of Ghana. Their primary source of income has been tourism and individuals who create art.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- While in Cape Coast, we went to multiple schools to volunteer and provide resources so that the students can adequately get educated. Also in Cape Coast, we worked with Ghana Health Service to provide families with the paperwork to receive insurance and bug nets to combat malaria.
- When I was moved to Accra, we worked with Planned Parenthood of Ghana (PPAG) to raise awareness about sexual health. Also, we did a community outreach fair in which we educated individuals about safe sex and handed out items to promote safe sex.

## OUTCOMES

Over the span of four weeks, the team and I were able to support Ghanaians in two cities. We were able to teach community members how to advocate and educate government officials regarding alleviation of poverty, education, health and youth involvement.

My Major Accomplishments include:

- Educating youth about the importance of sexual health
- Evaluating a policy that included the voices of youth
- Advocating for families that did not have health insurance



## SKILLS UTILIZED

- Appropriately asked questions to demonstrate cultural competency
- Adjusted to a new environment by letting the natives know who I am and learning who they are
- Managed the multiple changes in work due to a limited staff
- Appreciated the role of an observer

## CONNECTIONS

Classroom:

- SW 623 – Interpersonal Practice with Families  
This course taught me the different dynamics of a family and the broad definition of the term family in the world we live in today. The course helped me as I engaged multiple families at the Cape Coast Assembly. While at The Cape Coast Assembly, I was able to work with the Ghanaian social workers to determine if the families needed financial assistance.

- SW 713 – Youth Empowerment

This course taught me how to engage, assist and organize youth. When I arrived at Planned Parenthood of Ghana, I contained the knowledge to adequately work with the youth regarding the topic of sexual health. We planned and organized a sexual health fair.

Career:

- When I volunteered at the Cape Coast Assembly, I was able to evaluate a private school in Cape Coast. This can help me in future work showing me how to evaluate a school adequately.



## LESSONS LEARNED

- I learned In Ghana that I am considered a Black American and not an African American. In Ghana, Black Americans are also called “Bibinii.” The term means a black person.
- I also learned how privileged Americans are. When we deep-rooted ourselves in the community, we were able to see how tough Ghanaian families have it on a daily basis.

## ADVICE

- Conduct research on the country you are studying abroad at. It will give you a base of knowledge to build upon once you arrive.
- Arrive at your destination with an outgoing mindset. You can not learn if you are in your room all day.
- Indulge in the culture you are learning about. Other than foods or activities that may harm you, I encourage you to try new things.

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