

GPSF NEWS

Ghana Physicians and Surgeons Foundation of North America

Summer 2024 Edition

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FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

Phone: 601-955-0903

Welcome to the relaunch of the GPSF News!! In this issue, you'll meet the 2024-2025 GPSF Executive Board and Education Committee Leads and get a glimpse into what we have been working on thus far in our tenure. You'll learn about strategic partnerships formed, benefits for members with nonprofit organizations, and updates to the permanent license process. We also highlight a University of Ghana Medical School class dedicated to sponsoring an international clinical elective for a Ghana-based medical student. Additionally, we spotlight two nonprofit organizations dedicated to changing the healthcare climate and providing opportunities for quality care for communities throughout Ghana—Cancer Support Network Foundation and Ghana Brain & Spine Foundation.

We have a lot of exciting things planned for this year, some of which you can find in the upcoming events section of the newsletter. We encourage you to get engaged with your local chapter or to consider forming a chapter in your local area if there isn't one. If you are interested in guidance on how to start a local chapter, please email ghanaphysiciansusa@gmail.com and we will connect with you to assist in the process. We want to hear about what each chapter is doing locally; please share your efforts with us so we can highlight them in future editions of this newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and welcome your suggestions and contributions for future editions.

Address: 3650 ROGERS RD #289, WAKE FOREST NC 27587









Dr. FRANCISCA ABANYIE

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

GREETINGS GPSF MEMBERSHIP,

I am excited about relaunching the GPSF News, the organization's official newsletter. Relaunching the newsletter is somewhat serendipitous for me, as I recently came across an email from 2010, the year I first joined GPSF; the email exchange was with Dr. Elijah Paintsil, then-secretary of GPSF, requesting I write a piece on my experience at my first Annual GPSF Conference, for what I believe was the first GPSF newsletter. The email bolstered my desire to reintroduce the GPSF newsletter to cover the efforts and projects of the Foundation.

As your 2024-2025 GPSF President there are three main areas that I've asked our board to focus on:

<u>Strategic Partnerships</u>: partnering with organizations who are working toward similar goals of improving healthcare in Ghana. I believe we are stronger together and we can make a greater impact working with aligned organizations.

Missions: setting up a framework to make the work of medical and public health missions easier. I believe we can establish systems to help coordinate the efforts of the nonprofit organizations of GPSF members that provide healthcare and various services to our brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers back home in Ghana.

<u>Structure</u>: establishing efficient systems that will allow us to work smarter, not harder; to allow us to build a structural foundation that will ultimately move GPSF to the next level.

A few weeks ago, our GPSF Treasurer, Dr. Louisa Lawson, reminded me that it had only been a month since the annual conference and the start of the 2024-2025 term for the organization. She made mention of this because so much had transpired in such a short time. The 2024-2025 executive board hit the ground running and has been very busy planning and implementing plans for the upcoming year.

















So, what have we been up to? Here's a selected list of what we've been able to accomplish thus far:

- Held two Executive Board Meetings and two Education Committee Meetings. During these meetings we:
 - reviewed feedback from the annual conference and started planning how we can improve future conferences
 - reviewed and revised the permanent license process for obtaining Ghana medical license
 - > revised the conference theme for the 2025 Annual Conference
 - crafted a calendar of events for the upcoming year
 - established a budget for the upcoming year
- Completed 8 hours of leadership training in preparation for taking GPSF to the next level
- Relaunched the GPSF Mentoring Program with our young professionals
 - ➤ 12 mentee-mentor pairs
 - Orientation for mentees and mentors to establish expectations and breakout sessions for mentees and mentors to connect
- Planning for this year's Medical Knowledge Fiesta
 - Soliciting abstracts and a keynote speaker
 - ➤ Date: 25th to 27th September 2024 in Accra, Ghana
- Connecting with Chapter Leads to plan for membership recruitment and engagement events
- Revamping the GPSF website to enhance the security, user interface, and user experience
- Established strategic partnerships:
 - Delta Airlines
 - ➤ Humanitarian Travel Agency
 - ➤ Ghanaian Women's Association of Georgia
 - ➤ La Constance Center for Global Health
 - Ghana Healthcare Volunteers of Georgia
 - University of Ghana Medical & Dental School, class of 2006









This past June, I was honored to serve as the keynote speaker for the Ghanaian Women's Association of Georgia's (GWAG) 9th Annual Maternity Fundraising Gala. I was accompanied to this event by our Vice President, Dr. Ernestina French. The essence of this altruistic event was accentuated by La Constance Center for Global Health's founder, former GPSF President, Dr. Alex Boafo's proposal to partner with GPSF to make a donation to support GWAG's initiative. Through La Constance a donation of enough prenatal vitamins for 500 pregnant women in Ghana was provided to GWAG to distribute at the hospitals they have adopted this year. Watch the keynote address here.

In August, Dr. French, a few Georgia Chapter members, and I will be attending Atlanta's Ghana Fest 2024. At this event we will be partnering with Ghana Healthcare Volunteers of Georgia to provide blood pressure and glucose screening for the local community. We hope this will be one of many events that the Georgia Chapter will engage in to share the GPSF name and mission with the local community. We encourage other chapters to do likewise and share their experience.

This is just the beginning; we are in the process of establishing additional partnerships and working to provide more opportunities for our members. Stay tuned and check out the pages of this newsletter to learn more and stay engaged.

Yours in service,

Dr. Francisca Abanyie 2024-2025 GPSF President



















WHO TO CONTACT



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· CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS- SPONSORSHIPS
· HUMANITARIAN TRAVEL BENEFITS

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

·MEMBERSHIP DRIVE ·NEWSLETTER ·BALLOTING FOR VOTING

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• MEDICAL STUDENT ROTATIONS
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MR. MICHAEL MENSAH-MAMFO

MESSAGE FROM YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' PRESIDENT

GPSF Young Professionals,

I hope this message finds you well and thriving in your respective journeys! We are excited to announce that we have transitioned leadership to a new Executive Board. The following medical students will be helping to lead this new crop of YP Executives: David Agyapong (Co-Vice President), Michelle Amankwa (Co-Vice President), and Sheila Alice Tayie (Secretary). This is an exciting time filled with new ideas and fresh energy, and we can't wait to share all the upcoming events and initiatives with you. Here are a few events we are currently working on:

Mock Interviews for Premedical Students: We're thrilled to announce a series of mock interviews tailored for premedical students starting on August 24 at 10 a.m. EST. This is a golden opportunity to practice and perfect your interview skills in a supportive environment.

Clinical Student Panels: Our clinical student panels are back by popular demand! These sessions offer a unique chance to hear firsthand experiences from current clinical students. Stay tuned for more information about specific panel dates/times in the coming weeks.

Resident Mentorship Initiatives: We're excited to introduce our new resident mentorship initiative, which is designed to foster meaningful connections between residents and young professionals. A google form link will be disseminated to glean interest from potential mentees and mentors soon.

And Many More! Beyond these flagship events, we have a wealth of other initiatives planned to enrich your professional journey. Keep an eye on your inbox and our social media channels for more details and announcements.

If you have any questions, feedback, or need more information about any of the events, please feel free to reach out to us via email at gpsfyoungprofessionals1@gmail.com. We are here to help!

Warm Regards, Michael Mensah-Mamfo GPSF YP President







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21ST ANNUALGPSFCONFERENCE

We had a very successful annual conference in Atlanta, GA on May 17-18, 2024. The conference theme of Modern Cancer Care: An Integrative Approach to Excellence, Equity, and Innovation for Africa allowed for a broad scope of presentations. We had a total of 20 presenters, many of whom presented at the conference for the first time, alongside our contingency of dependable legacy presenters. The keynote address by Dr. Alex Adjei challenged us to explore opportunities to improve the process of establishing research collaboration with our colleagues in Ghana. Our recent webinar hosted on August 4, entitled 'Research Collaboration in Ghana' featuring Dr. Alex Adjei and Dr. Kwaku Poku Asante explored this topic in more detail.

Presentations from young professionals, faculty from Ashesi University, physicians local to Georgia, dentists coming from as far as Ghana, and everywhere in between made the event a memorable one and undoubtedly one of the best annual meetings to date. The conference culminated with our fundraising dinner dance graced by the presence of Mrs. Afua Asantewaa, a fun-filled and engaging event that raised \$18,000 towards scholarships and mission work.

Thank you to all our members who made the conference and dinner dance a huge success; your support and dedication to the Foundation is the fuel that keeps the organization moving forward. Here are a few pictures from the 2-day event. More pictures here: <u>Conference</u> and <u>Dinner Dance</u>.





















DR. JULIET APPIAH-QUANSAH



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

Cancer Support Network Foundation (CSNF): A Brief History and Recent Achievements

1. History of the Organization

The Cancer Support Network Foundation (CSNF) was founded by Dr. Juliet Appiah Quansah, a US-based medical oncologist/hematologist, and her husband, Franklin Kofi Quansah. Borne out of compassion, CSNF aims to support individuals affected by cancer, particularly in Ghana.

Given the high cost of cancer treatment and the low average monthly salary in Ghana, many patients struggle to afford necessary care. Since its inception in 2018, CSNF has provided financial, social, and psychological support to numerous cancer patients and their families, helping to alleviate the financial burden, and improving access to life-saving treatments.

2. Efforts and Success During Cancer Survivors Awareness Month

In June this year, CSNF marked Ghana's inaugural Cancer Survivors Month, inspired by similar observances in the USA and other countries. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about cancer survivorship and advocate for the Ministry of Health to officially recognize June as Cancer Survivors Month.

CSNF's activities during this month began with an awareness walk, followed by a Zoom talk with cancer survivors, cancer education sessions, and breast cancer screenings at Odupong Senior High School in the Central Region. The month concluded with a gala attended by representatives from the Ghana Health Service, medical practitioners, journalists, and cancer survivors.



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CSNF has countless stories of hope and resilience. Here are a few:

- Ramatu's Story: Diagnosed with stage II breast cancer at 39, Ramatu could not afford treatment. CSNF provided \$3,000 (GHS 20,000) for her chemotherapy, surgery, and radiation. She is now two years cancer-free and volunteers as an organizer for the foundation.
- Mrs. Veronica Turkson's Story: A petty trader with four children, Veronica was diagnosed with advanced cervical cancer. Unable to afford the GHS 4,000 (\$500) needed for treatment, she turned to CSNF for help. She is now two years post-treatment and is doing well.
- A Story of Dignity: Madam Mary, a 57-year-old woman deemed a witch in her community due to her condition (stage 4 skin cancer) received over \$3,000 from CSNF for her palliative treatment. She lived for 16 months with dignity and without pain before passing away.
- 4. **Joining On-the-Ground Efforts: Screening and Education** CSNF regularly organizes free cancer screenings, health walks, and educational campaigns. Here are some upcoming events open to the general public:

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month (September 2024)

- ➤ Zoom discussion on 9/21/2024
- Donation drive at Korle Bu GU unit to support prostate cancer patients

Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October 2024)

- Mass breast cancer screenings at Mamponteng in the Ashanti Region and Ahafo Kenyasi I & II in the Ahafo Region
- Zoom discussion and monetary donation drive for breast cancer patients

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month (January 2025)

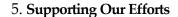
- Mass screening for HIV/AIDS patients at the Pantang General Hospital ART unit
- Zoom discussion and monetary donation drive for cervical cancer patients











The fight against cancer in Ghana requires collective effort and resources. Your donation can help fund life-saving treatments for patients who cannot afford them, expand our educational programs, and support our advocacy efforts. You can also contribute your time during our many advocacy programs and outreaches.

Ways to Donate

- Zelle: Csnetworkgh@gmail.com
- Cash App: CSNF
- PayPal: Cancer Support Network Foundation
- ➤ MoMo: 053-046-2988(Cancer Support Network Foundation LBG)
- https://www.cancersupportnf.org/

Join us in our mission to ensure every cancer patient receives the care and support they deserve. Your contribution can bring hope and relief to those in their greatest time of need.

















NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

Ghana Brain & Spine Foundation

Transforming Brain and Spine Health in Ghana

At the Ghana Brain & Spine Foundation, we are committed to making a significant impact on brain and spine health in Ghana. Our mission is to provide comprehensive support, resources, and educational opportunities to communities in need. By focusing on the development of world-class neuro and spine healthcare, we aim to improve the lives of individuals across Ghana, particularly those in underprivileged and rural areas.

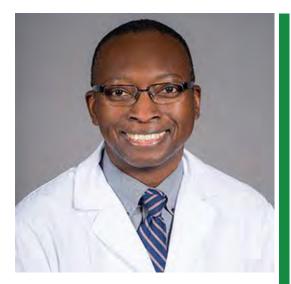
Empowering the Next Generation

One of our key initiatives is to nurture the intellectual growth and brain development of Ghanaian youth. Through our innovative Mind Masters Program, we sponsor talented youth each year to develop their cognitive abilities using a structured chess and math curriculum. This program not only enhances their problem-solving and critical thinking skills but also instills a love for learning and intellectual development. Additionally, our Scholarship Program provides much-needed financial assistance to students aspiring to careers in the medical and scientific fields, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder their dreams of becoming future leaders in healthcare.

Building a Healthier Future for Ghana

Our work extends beyond educational programs. We are also dedicated to improving access to quality neurological and spine healthcare. We conduct neurological healthcare screenings and develop infrastructure in rural areas like Oda to support ongoing local medical efforts. Our strategic planning and leadership development initiatives ensure that we have a sustainable impact, while our partnerships with local and international organizations enhance our capacity to deliver on our mission. By integrating comprehensive support with innovative educational programs, the Ghana Brain & Spine Foundation is paving the way for a healthier and more prosperous future for all Ghanaians.

Stay tuned for more updates on our programs and how you can get involved in making a difference!



DR. MAXWELL BOAKYE











PERMANENT LICENSE UPDATES

T hrough the MOU between Ghana Medical and Dental Council and the Ghana Physicians and Surgeons Foundation, GPSF members register for their permanent license at a discounted rate and are exempted from the registration examination in exchange for providing annual training to residents and fellows in Ghana. A few changes to the process for permanent licensure application for GPSF members have been instituted:

- All GPSF members who have obtained their permanent licensure through the organization will have to sign a contract affirming their understanding of their obligation to provide annual training to maintain their permanent license. Several options for completing this training will be detailed in the contract for members to select from. Please look out for an email with details in the coming weeks.
- Initial permanent license fee is now \$500, includes license fee and processing fee.
- Permanent license applications will be submitted for processing during the following months:
 - > February
 - ➤ May
 - August
 - November

Please submit your applications prior to the first of each of these months for submission by the stated month.

- Permanent license renewals must be submitted by October 15. Renewals will require the following:
 - ➤ Active GPSF membership
 - ➤ Fulfillment of annual training of residents in Ghana requirement (waived for 2024 renewal)
 - Copy of active U.S. state license
 - ➤ \$50 fee paid to GPSF
- Physical copies of permanent licenses will be delivered during annual conference



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GHANA RESIDENCY TRAINING

A diaspora wide effort to contribute to residency training in Ghana is underway through the MOU signed between the Medical and Dental Council, GPSF and our sister organization in the United Kingdom – GDDA-UK.

You do not need to be in academics to be part of this effort. If you obtain(ed) your medical license through our MOU, you are required to be part of the diaspora faculty and to contribute to residency training annually through your designated faculty group. There are 6 thematic areas through which you may contribute to training:

- 1. Providing lectures (virtual or in person) to residents & fellows
- 2. Providing clinical training to residents in hospitals in Ghana
- 3. Securing external rotation for residents in hospitals outside Ghana
- 4. Providing research supervision for residents
- 5. Serving as mentors for residents
- 6. Serving as examiners for residency exams

We welcome all our members and their wider network. These efforts are not limited to GPSF members. Reach out to our residency training coordinator Dr. Patricia Ampadu – trisha.ampadu@gmail.com for more information.







PERKS FOR MEMBERS WITH NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

- Delta Airlines Sponsorship Opportunities
- Access to Humanitarian Travel Agents
 - ➤ assistance with travel arrangements for mission trips at low fares
 - ➤ 3 free checked bags
- Featured on GPSF website
- Spotlight in upcoming GPSF News
 Email thegpsfpresident@gmail.com for more information.



UGMS CLASS OF 2006 ALUMNI PARTNER WITH GPSF TO SPONSOR INTERNATIONAL CLINICAL ELECTIVE FOR GHANA-BASED STUDENT

The graduating class of 2006 of the University Ghana Medical & Dental School living in the United States of America, in partnership with GPSF is spearheading an initiative to sponsor a motivated medical or dental student with financial need to participate in an international clinical elective in 2026. The group envisions a future where multiple medical and dental students in Ghana will benefit from this exposure and help shape health care delivery in Ghana.

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RECENT EVENT GPSF/GCPS-HOSTED WEBINAR



On August 4, 2024, GPSF in collaboration with the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons (GCPS) held an engaging webinar entitled Research Collaboration in Ghana. The webinar was hosted by GPSF President, Dr. Francisca Abanyie, and moderated by GCPS Rector, Professor Richard Adanu. The guest speakers Dr. Alex Adjei, Chief of Cleveland Clinic's Cancer Institute, and Dr. Kwaku Poku Asante, Director of Kintampo Health Research Centre in Ghana shared their challenges and success stories of collaborating 'across the pond'. The webinar was well attended and the attentive participants, many of whom shared their discouragement about failed attempts to set up collaborations in Ghana, walked away from the session with resources to help overcome the barriers they've faced and felt encouraged about the possibilities of successful collaborations in the future.

*







UPCOMING EVENTS



GPSF Membership Meeting Dates September 22, 2024; 4:00 pm EST January 19, 2025; 4:00 pm EST April 13, 2025; 4:00 pm EST May 17, 2025; Annual Conference







Medical Knowledge Fiesta September 25—27, 2024









Annual Conference Abstract Submissions

- > Opens: September 1, 2024
- **➤ Closes: January 15, 2025**



Annual Conference Theme



ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP IN THE FACE OF EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES: THE ROLE OF THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

SUGGESTED TOPIC AREAS BY SPECIALTY (NOT LIMITED TO THESE SPECIALTIES OR TOPICS):

NEUROLOGY- MENINGITIS AND ASSOCIATED NEUROLOGIC SEQUALAE

<u>NEPHROLOGY</u>- COVAN (COVID-ASSOCIATED NEPHROPATHY) OR HIVAN (HIV-ASSOCIATED NEPHROPATHY)

INFECTIOUS DISEASES/INTERNAL MEDICINE- MONKEYPOX

CARDIOLOGY- ENDOCARDITIS, POT'S SYNDROME

ONCOLOGY - LYMPHOMAS (HIV-ASSOCIATED), HEPATOCELLULAR CARCINOMA, KAPOSI SARCOMA, ANAL CANCER (HPV)

GYNECOLOGY- VULVAR MALIGNANCIES (HPV)

GASTROENTEROLOGY- GASTRIC CANCER (H. PYLORI)

<u>PAIN MANAGEMENT</u>- INFLAMMATORY NEUROPATHY; POST-HERPETIC NEURALGIA

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Are you passionate about making a difference in our organization? GPSF is seeking enthusiastic and dedicated members to join our Membership Committee!

Why Volunteer?

- Make an Impact: Help shape the future of GPSF by contributing to membership growth and engagement
- **Develop Skills:** Gain valuable experience in leadership, event planning, and community outreach
- Network: Connect with like-minded individuals and expand your professional network

Role and Responsibilities:

- Develop strategies to attract and retain members
- Assist in planning and organizing membership drives and events
- Collaborate with other committee members to enhance member engagement
- Attend quarterly committee meetings

What We're Looking For:

- Strong communication and organizational skills
- A passion for the GPSF mission and a desire to contribute to our community
- Ability to work well in a team and independently

How to Apply: Send an email to Dr. Ernestina French (Vice President) at **ernestina.nyarko@gmail.com** with a brief introduction and why you'd like to volunteer.

Deadline: Please apply by August 17, 2024

Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference!

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THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS



