

Abdul Manan

Marketing Consultant



Before moving to the United States in 2002, Abdul Manan headed an international travel program that offered Ghanaians residing in the United States an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of their home country. Once he relocated to the United States, himself, he continued to identify, and to develop ways to support the Ghanaian community.

His journey of service began early on. As a student in Ghana, he trained as a tour guide under Ghana's National Service Association at the W. E. B. DuBois Memorial Center, in Accra, Ghana. After completing his training, he initiated his tertiary education by enrolling at the Institute of Professional Studies. There, he learned skills that have been valuable in establishing and operating a number community-based initiatives.

During his time as a tour guide for the National Service Association, Mr. Manan met the leader of the Imani Temple, located in Washington, D.C. From their exchange, Mr. Manan established Imani Tours Ghana. Although no longer in operation, Imani Tours, between 2001 and 2003, organized trips from the United States to Ghana, including one such trip on the maiden flight of Ghana Airways, from the Baltimore/Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport to Accra.

In addition to exposing travelers to the usual cultural, entertainment and traditional/ contemporary arts fare of Ghana, Imani Tours actually provided visitors information about the diversity of Ghana, including its various ethnic groups, its economy and its political system. The resulting impact of Imani Tours' ability to merge Ghana's vital elements into an enjoyable vacation experience was that some travelers elected to make Ghana their permanent home.

Mr. Manan obtained his bachelor of arts degree in business administration from Eastern University in Pennsylvania. During his time at Eastern, he was a member of Students in Free Enterprising (SIFE), an international non-profit organization with a two-fold purpose: It works with students who want to change their communities positively; and enables students to learn practical knowledge to become socially responsible business leaders.

Through SIFE, Abdul Manan worked with the children in his Philadelphia neighborhood, and advocated for underprivileged children at the former Guion S. Bluford Elementary School in Southwest Philadelphia. Ultimately, his mission is to transform the lives of underprivileged and underserved children through the development of their learning skills. *(continued)*



While at Eastern University, Mr. Manan also organized the 2005 Bikes for Ghana project, an initiative that collected hundreds of donated bicycles and shipped them to the village of Yendi, in northern Ghana. Rather than have students deprived of educational opportunities, or to be in harm's way, the bicycles allowed refugee and displaced children caught between the ethnic conflict between the Dagoamba and Kokombas tribes to travel quickly to school.

Without the supportive efforts of people like Manan, and the bicycles he shipped from the Bikes for Ghana project, the children would have to walk up to 20 miles to get to school. Manan's efforts inspired a number of other Eastern students, the Wayne United Methodist Church, Philadelphia leaders and community groups, the director of Upper Merion Township's Parks and recreation, as well as soccer coach, Mark Wagner, to get involved. The project was a huge success.

In 2009, Arcadia University presented Mr. Manan with his MBA in Strategic International Business. This graduate degree program gave him the opportunity to expand his knowledge of global business practices in both for-profit and nonprofit settings, including through study trips to Costa Rica and Spain, in 2007 and 2009.

Currently self-employed in the transportation industry, Mr. Manan holds a leadership position in the Ghanaian Association in Philadelphia; and, since 2018, has served as an administrator for Al-Jamia, one of Philadelphia's largest masjids (mosques).

During his free time, he supports a weekend after-school program for children of African descent in southwest Philadelphia. ■