



# MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWSHIP

FOR YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS

## IOWA

Tippie College of Business  
Institute for International Business

## 2024 University of Iowa Mandela Washington Fellows



### **Adja Boudy Kante, Senegal**

Adja Boudy Kante has over ten years of experience as an entrepreneur. Adja Boudy is the founder and CEO of Cereal House, a company that promotes healthy nutrition by producing granolas and snacks to combat non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and hypertension. She has also worked as a community manager for three years and volunteers with an organization that promotes education, women's rights, and food distribution. Adja Boudy has a master's degree in environmental and sustainable development. She is dedicated to influencing and educating communities about the benefits of a healthy diet in order to combat non-communicable diseases. Following the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Adja Boudy intends to change people's eating habits in her community by raising awareness, developing activities and programs about how healthy food can reduce food-related diseases, and establishing a 'cantine sociale' to help children in a suburb have a proper breakfast.



### **Amoin Claudina Raissa Yao, Cote d'Ivoire**

Raissa Yao has over six years of experience in program management, working with entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship support organizations. She works as a program manager at DigiFemmes, where she focuses on women's empowerment and youth unemployment, with a particular emphasis on female-led businesses. The goal is to increase the competitiveness of female entrepreneurs through digital transformation. She organizes and participates in every volunteer and free program that assists women and men online and onsite through monitoring activities; she is also involved in their training to raise awareness about digital and technology. Raissa earned a master's degree in logistics and transportation. Raissa plans to lead small and medium-sized enterprises through digital transformation, train and motivate over 1000 men and women in San Pedro about the benefits of simple digital tools and advise them on how to expand their businesses by 2028 after completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship.

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**Dominica Tatiana Dougba, Benin**

Dominica Tatiana Dougba holds an MSC in Agriculture and has over three years of experience in business development where she excels as a trainer and project manager. Currently, Tatiana is employed at Management for Development Foundation in Benin, where she plays a pivotal role in overseeing the AFFORD Business Centre Benin project. Collaborating with her team, they support more than 50 local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) through capacity building, coaching, access to finance and market, and advocacy. These endeavors aim to empower SMEs to generate sustainable employment opportunities for youth and women. Working within this field allows her to contribute to their success by offering diverse assistance, guidance, strategic planning, or technological enhancements. Upon completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Tatiana plans to use the knowledge, skills, and networks acquired to further support and mentor SMEs within her community.



**Eleanor Phiri, Malawi**

Eleanor Phiri has over three years of experience in project finance management and social entrepreneurship. Eleanor is the founder of Eco-Protein Africa Limited, which is dedicated to driving sustainable solutions for food waste management and animal feed production. She also volunteers as the finance and administration coordinator for the Youth Empowerment and Support Initiative. Eleanor holds a bachelor's degree in internal auditing from the University of Malawi Polytechnic. Eleanor is committed to environmental stewardship, social impact, and agricultural innovation. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Eleanor plans to leverage the knowledge and networks gained through the fellowship to scale the impact of her work across Malawi and neighboring countries.



**Ernany Jorge Oliveira, Cabo Verde**

Ernany Jorge Oliveira has over nine years of experience in the tourism sector. Currently, Ernany is a manager at West Tour, focusing on tourist business in Cape Verde. Additionally, he has worked as a volunteer on efforts to protect turtles and endangered birds with the organization Biosfera Cabo Verde. Ernany holds a level five professional qualification in Tourism and is motivated to develop and increase his knowledge of the tourism business. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Ernany plans to continue developing his knowledge in the areas of tourism and digital marketing, develop his communication skills, and grow his network with other professionals.

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### **Esther Nyakiri Nduta, Kenya**

Esther Nyakiri has over 10 years of experience in social entrepreneurship, food technology, and project management. She is the co-founder and project lead of Blue Firms Investment, a grassroots mobilization organization in Kenya that empowers women and youth to become small-scale farmers. The organization has impacted over 250 households, increasing per-household income by 104%. She is enthusiastic about rural development, women's empowerment, and girls' education. She founded Urembo Mashinani CBO to mentor school-aged girls on sexual reproduction and mentorship, and she received the Young Agripreneur of the Year 2023 award for African women in agriculture. Esther earned a B.Sc. in food science and technology. Motivated by post-harvest losses and food insecurity, she is determined to make Africa food secure. Esther hopes to expand her organization to 10,000 people in one year and to other African countries in two years after completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship. Esther aims to run one of Africa's largest food companies within the next ten years.



### **Fatima Issaka, Ghana**

Fatima Issaka has over three years of experience in the agricultural and agribusiness sectors. Fatima is currently the agribusiness and entrepreneurship access market coordinator at the Ghana Enterprises Agency for the Business in a Box project, which aims to create dignified and fulfilling jobs for Ghana's youth, as well as the managing director of R & Fatimatah Limited. R & Fatimatah Limited is an agribusiness that works with women smallholder farmers to aggregate maize and soybeans, as well as provide access to inputs, extensions, and mechanized services. She has collaborated with international NGOs and government agencies to help farmers gain access to markets, inputs, and mechanization services, as well as training in proper agronomic practices and post-harvest losses. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural technology from the University for Development Studies. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Fatima plans to grow R & Fatimatah Limited into a model agribusiness that contributes to rural development, climate resilience, and environmental conservation.



### **Fernando de Castro dos Santos, Angola**

Fernando dos Santos has over six years of experience in software development. Fernando is currently the founder and CEO of a software development organization, where he focuses on providing innovative solutions to clients in a variety of industries. Fernando is passionate about business and entrepreneurship, which inspired him to establish the 42 Code School, an organization dedicated to teaching programming skills to individuals from Luanda's marginalized communities. He is committed to using his expertise to positively impact society by closing the digital divide and generating opportunities for underserved populations. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Fernando intends to broaden the scope of his activities, fostering technical literacy and entrepreneurship in Angola and beyond, ultimately contributing to larger-scale socioeconomic growth and empowerment.



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### **Gift Govere, Zimbabwe**

Gift Govere has over six years of experience in social policy, disability rights, women's rights, gender mainstreaming, economic empowerment, and promoting the rights and inclusion of marginalized groups in development processes. Gift is a program analyst at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), focused on promoting disability rights and inclusion, access to justice, gender equality, and Leave No One Behind programming. He holds a master's degree in sociology and social anthropology from the University of Zimbabwe, and he is pursuing a PhD at the University of Pretoria. His research interests are the participation and inclusion of marginalized groups in development, leadership, and decision-making processes. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Gift intends to use the acquired skills, knowledge, and networks to continue advocating for disability and women's rights, and sustainable development trajectories, while also contributing to addressing the challenges and barriers faced by marginalized groups in both the public and private sectors.



### **Gordon Victor Akejo, Uganda**

Gordon Victor Akejo has over five years of experience in agriculture, education, and extension. He is the founder and chief executive officer of Gordon's Agricultural Organization-Uganda Limited. A company focused on providing last-mile smallholder access with vital agricultural resources such as certified seeds, farm tools, water sources and more. It also provides extension services and microfinance credit services tailored to women and youth locally. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education and Extension from Egerton University in Kenya, which was founded by the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture and Mastercard Foundation. Akejo completed an internship at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization. He is committed to increasing farmer incomes and addressing food insecurity, upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, he aims to further scale his impact by expanding access to sustainable agricultural resources and empowering rural communities.



### **Isaac Garyazon Redd Jr., Liberia**

Isaac G. Redd Jr. has over five years of experience in business. Isaac is a manager at Kpatawee Waterfalls Argo Eco Tourism, where he oversees marketing and activities. He also co-founded Classic Cane, a natural beverage, and has worked as the communication and corporate affairs manager at Classic Cane for many years. Isaac has a master's degree in marketing. He is motivated to promote Liberia's beautiful landscape and the country as a whole. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Isaac intends to return and help his local community by providing a better livelihood and sustainability.

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### **Jubilee Mzingaye Sibanda, Zimbabwe**

Jubilee Sibanda has over four years of experience in research and development. Currently, Jubilee is a projects assistant at Great Zimbabwe University Innovation Hub, focusing on artificial intelligence-based solutions development, and additive manufacturing techniques, specifically 3D printing, to revolutionize how we approach education, prototyping, renewable energy, and sustainable manufacturing. Jubilee has successfully led projects that push the boundaries from smart waste management systems that integrate artificial intelligence (AI) for a cleaner environment to agri-solar initiatives that empower communities through renewable energy. He is also a devout Red Cross volunteer, and educator of AI and 3D printing capacitation skills workshops conducted to mentor local students. Jubilee graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Science in Applied Physics and is earning his Masters in Mechatronics and Artificial Intelligence engineering. Jubilee is motivated by the remarkable power of innovation to revolutionize societies, solve complex problems, enhance lives and the satisfaction of seeing a tech-driven solution come to life and make a tangible difference. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Jubilee will equip young people and farmers in Zimbabwe with the tools on advanced technologies in 3D printing, agricultural robotics, and artificial intelligence necessary to adopt sustainable practices, implement scalable solutions key challenges in agriculture and energy.



### **Koloina Anjatiana Ramaromandray, Madagascar**

Koloina Ramaromandray has over six years of experience with impact investing in Madagascar. She is currently the blended finance program director at Miarakap, where she focuses on financing and supporting entrepreneurs who help to conserve biodiversity and develop local communities. With a master's degree in finance, Koloina is committed to leveraging the private sector and entrepreneurship as effective tools to mitigate poverty and environmental stress. Koloina intends to expand her impact after completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship by raising and launching a regional biodiversity and climate fund to finance and support entrepreneurs throughout Africa.



### **Kuleile Ambrose Mokhitli, Lesotho**

Kuleile Mokhitli has over five years of experience in environmental conservation and climate change issues. Kuleile is the founder and CEO of Eco-Culture Organization, which focuses on sustainable forest management, catchment conservation, and livelihoods. He is also the Managing Director of Essence Construction, a design and construction company. Kuleile volunteered as an environmental coordinator for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa's Diocese of Lesotho. He earned a diploma in architectural technology from Lerotholi Polytechnic. Kuleile chose environmental conservation after taking an environmental science module in his architectural studies. Furthermore, changing climatic conditions, which put many people in vulnerable situations,

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increased his desire to positively impact their lives and the lives of future generations. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Kuleile intends to accelerate policy evaluation and incorporate changes that will positively change the way things are done in our country, Lesotho, by holding those responsible for emissions, land degradation, and forest degradation accountable.



### **Maryam Abbas Abdulkadir, Nigeria**

Maryam Bichi is a digital marketing specialist with more than seven years of experience. She is a digital content developer, social media business coach, and consultant who advises and trains small-business owners on how to properly manage their online presence. She is currently pursuing an MBA with a marketing concentration at Dangote Business School at Bayero University, Kano. She is the convener of the Mu-Inganta Sana'ar Mu Conference and an Associate Registered Advertising Practitioner with APCON. Maryam is the founder of Mu-Inganta Digital Concept, a digital marketing agency encompassing several subsidiaries, including Ciniki-Mart, an e-commerce and online marketing platform; the Mu-Inganta Digital Institute; and Mu-Inganta Hub, a learning platform tailored for digital skills and digital marketing education. She has over 15 digital marketing certifications, including credentials as a Certified E-commerce Specialist.



### **Michael Benjamin, Nigeria**

Michael Benjamin has over eight years of experience in leadership and entrepreneurship. Currently, Michael serves as manager at Micotech ICT Solutions and Services, where he focuses on developing innovative information and communications technology (ICT) solutions. He is deeply committed to youth empowerment and has spearheaded initiatives like the Computer Initiative for All, which has empowered over 923 youths with basic ICT skills. With a bachelor's degree in food science and technology, Michael is committed to using technology to positively impact society. After the fellowship, Michael aims to expand his entrepreneurial endeavors, leveraging his newfound knowledge to drive sustainable change in his community.



### **Ondela Mlandu, South Africa**

Ondela Mlandu is an award-winning media and communications specialist with experience in journalism, digital marketing, radio broadcasting, and corporate communications. Ondela is passionate about communications, media, youth, and leading social change for girls and women at grassroots levels. Ondela is a corporate communications officer for a Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed corporation in South Africa, where she focuses on social transformation, entrepreneurship, communications, ESG, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ondela has contributed to national newspapers, magazines, and radio stations. She hosted podcasts for entrepreneurship platforms by interviewing people in the entrepreneurship sector, helping her keep abreast of what is happening in the business, leadership, and creativity. She is the Southern Africa Region Community Champion for the Global Shapers Community, an initiative by the World Economic Forum. Ondela is part of the class of 2022 Mail &



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Guardian Top 200 Young South Africans. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Ondela plans to promote a gender-equal society by shifting the South African narrative through policymaking and storytelling, while leading social change for girls and women. Her mandate is to create a space for extraordinary encounters, insightful conversations, collaborative workshops, and learnings for women to explore the entrepreneurship and career development space in South Africa.



### **Percy Ndieh-Cheh Fonge, Cameroon**

Percy Ndieh-Cheh Fonge has over seven years of experience in agricultural supply chain management. He is currently the co-founder and manager of D'Farma Ventures Ltd., specializing in value chain management and the transformation of tropical staples like plantains into derivatives such as flour, pastries, and biodegradable fiber for local and international markets. In addition to managing his company, Percy is the head of economic development for Cameroon's National Plantain

Interprofession. He has received numerous distinctions, including the 2022 Prix Jeunes Espoirs and the 2020 MINESUP-GETEC awards. He was also a finalist for the Prix Pierre Castel Agri-Business Award. Percy has a master's degree in crop protection and has received certificates and distinctions in business management from the African Managers Institute. Percy and his organization are driven by a desire to promote and invest in research, collaboration, specialization, the adoption of new technology, and the implementation of sustainable, cost-effective climate adaptation solutions to increase productivity and efficiency across food chains, with the ultimate goal of poverty alleviation and sustainable community development. After completing the Fellowship, he plans to share his knowledge, challenge existing solutions, and forge lasting partnerships with African and American changemakers. His goal is to help combat food insecurity and improve the African food supply system.



### **Rodas Tilahun Simmie, Ethiopia**

Rodas Simmie brings over six years of experience in healthcare administration, project management, digital health, and startup development. Rodas is currently the chief operations officer at Changing Images Communications PLC, where he oversees operations and service quality. He also works with digital startup founders to improve their soft and technical skills, as well as provide business development consulting. Rodas has a bachelor's degree in medicine and a master's in business administration. He is driven to create an

environment that allows aspiring changemakers to scale up their solutions and make a positive difference in their community. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Rodas intends to be a prominent figure in large-scale skill-building interventions throughout East Africa.

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### **Samson Christopher Genya, Tanzania**

Samson Genya has over 10 years of experience in technology and entrepreneurship. Currently, Samson is the chief executive officer of Endlesstec Limited, where he leads the team, spearheads strategic initiatives for profitability and impact, drives innovation and partnerships, and develops people. In addition to his role at Endlesstec, Samson is deeply committed to youth empowerment and digital transformation, actively engaging in mentorship programs for aspiring entrepreneurs and consulting for the African Union on emerging technologies. Samson holds a Bachelor of Science in

software engineering and is driven by the potential of technology and entrepreneurship to drive socioeconomic development. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Samson plans to further leverage technology for social impact and continue advocating for inclusive growth in Africa's digital economy, addressing the tech poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa and Tanzania.



### **Swaliho Kanneh, Sierra Leone**

Swaliho Kanneh is a social entrepreneur, food sufficiency ambassador, and the internal control system manager of ADORE SLE 1070, an agribusiness project. He has over half a decade of experience in the cocoa value chain sector. Swaliho currently leads a team of four extension officers, 12 community aggregators, and 1,000 farmers from 29 operational communities within five chiefdoms in Kenema District, where they work on quality control for strengthening the organic cocoa value chain in Sierra Leone. He developed an organic system plan that has aided the smooth mobilization and registration of 1,000 farmers into farmer-based groups in 29 operational communities within five chiefdoms in Kenema District. Swaliho holds a Bachelor of Science in

Economics from Njala University. Swaliho vision is to become a major driver in the transformation of the cocoa value chain to become a source of economic empowerment for marginalized rural women and youths. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, he intends to come back and work to provide an alternative source of income to hundreds of rural farmers that he is working with within the Kenema District.



### **Tshepo Manne, Botswana**

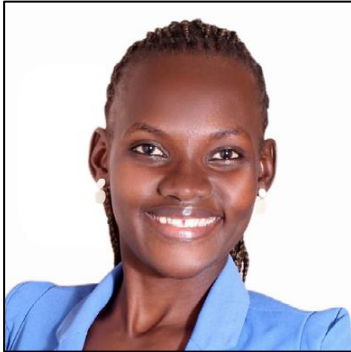
Tshepo Manne has over five years of experience in the climate-smart agriculture sector. Tshepo is currently the founder of GROW 365, a company that provides climate-smart agriculture solutions with a primary focus on hydroponics. Its services include hydroponic system design, installation supply and maintenance, and consulting. She is also passionate about youth empowerment and development, and she encourages Botswana youth to pursue hydroponic farming through her free youth business consultancy program, which assists them with

business plan development as well as grant applications. Tshepo has a bachelor's degree in social sciences, specializing in economics and public administration. She is passionate about developing and promoting climate-smart agriculture solutions that can help Botswana achieve food self-



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sufficiency while also reducing poverty and unemployment. Tshepo intends to be fully active in educating and changing Batswana's mindset about climate smart agriculture and how it can mitigate the effects of climate change, to be involved in climate smart agriculture policymaking, and to become an expert in climate change and climate smart agriculture issues after completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship.



### **Vivian Anena, Uganda**

Vivian Anena has over two years of experience in accounting and entrepreneurship. Currently, she is the founder and chief executive officer of Neni Peanuts Ltd, which aims to revolutionize Uganda's peanut value by providing contaminant-free peanut products to the population. In addition to her professional pursuits, Vivian is a passionate mentor for the youth and an advocate for pressing community challenges through her proficient debating skills. Before venturing into entrepreneurship, Vivian honed her accounting skills as a full-time and part-time accountant with various start-up companies. Vivian holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and finance from Kyambogo University. She is motivated by her determination to combat the alarming statistic that approximately 62% of peanuts and peanut products in Uganda are contaminated with aflatoxins and other harmful substances. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Vivian plans to expand the reach of Neni Peanuts Ltd, positioning it as a leading force in promoting safe and sustainable peanut production across Uganda. Her goal is to transform the peanut industry, create enduring positive impacts on the health and livelihoods of Uganda's communities, and establish herself as a role model for young entrepreneurs in Africa.



### **Tertu Iileka, Namibia**

Tertu Iileka has over 8 years of experience in the natural resources management sector in Namibia. Tertu is currently the Deputy Project Manager at the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia, supporting natural resources management and livelihood activities in Namibia's communal conservancies and community forests. In this role, Tertu's dedication, and support from partners have ensured the continued operation of about 85 conservancies, 40 community forests, 40 tourism establishments, and other entities supporting the conservation and management of natural resources in Namibia's communal conservancies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Tertu holds a Master's degree in Integrated Water Resources Management and a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Biology and Geography. Tertu is also a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) from the Project Management Institute. Tertu is an advocate for Sustainable Development Goals and her passion for community development and empathetic leadership style motivates her to support initiatives that contribute to improved livelihoods of rural communities in conservancies and community forests in Namibia. Upon completion of the fellowship, Tertu plans to support opportunities that enhance the local value addition of the indigenous natural products harvested by communities. The goal is to ensure that communities that are custodians of these natural products get a fair share of benefits from the commercialization of the natural resources that they conserve.