



Northeastern University
Africa Global Initiative

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Dear Readers,

As Chair of the Northeastern University Africa Global Initiative (AGI), I'm delighted to present this 'AGI Report 2024' highlighting important successes in Northeastern-Africa engagement.

The Africa Global Initiative is a banner under which we collate and present the education, research and other activities at Northeastern University related to our connections with African countries, and in support of Northeastern University goals. African engagement presents an outstanding, mutually beneficial set of opportunities for Northeastern University and African students, researchers and organizations alike. Northeastern University's unique focus, as a global university and as the leader in experiential education empowers every student for brilliant future career tracks. These attributes attract talented African students who are joining our global campus sites in increasing numbers. In turn, Northeastern students from the U.S. and other countries are expanding their vision through experiential opportunities in multiple African countries. Our prestigious Northeastern R1 research enterprise includes expanding pivotal connections with African partners, at the level of individual investigators and through exceptional university collaborations.

We are proud that Northeastern African alumni include leaders in research, government and industry, and we are so glad to have the families of our African students always part of the university.

Thank you for your interest in the Northeastern University Africa Global Initiative. We look forward to the expansion of important Northeastern-African education and research connections, that together contribute to the vibrant future of Northeastern University.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hazel Sive". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'H'.

Hazel Sive Ph.D.

Chair, Africa Global Initiative

Dean, Northeastern University College of Science

ENROLLMENT

In fall 2024, Northeastern University proudly welcomed students from twenty-three African nations, as highlighted on the map below. This diverse representation underscores the university's commitment to fostering an inclusive academic community.

Undergraduate enrollment from Africa increased by 35.71 percent, while graduate enrollment saw an impressive rise of 151.55 percent compared to 2023, with the strongest cohort coming from West Africa. The graduate programs in particular, experienced substantial growth in both applications and enrollments across most colleges as will be seen in subsequent pages of this report.

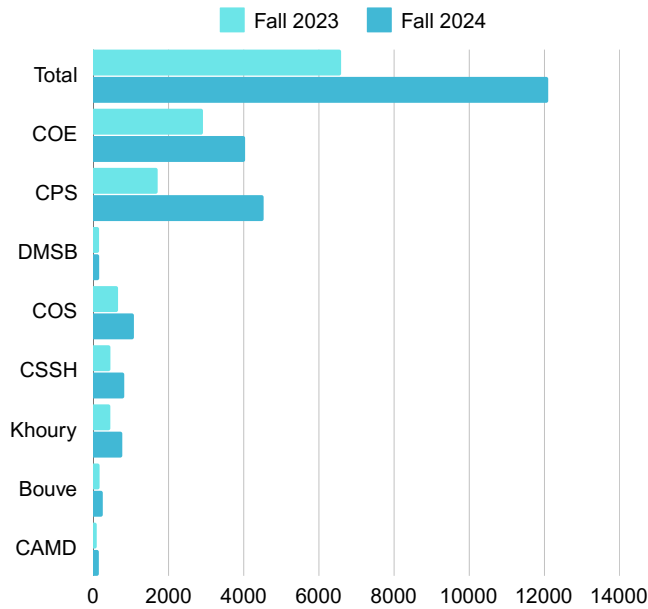
The university's dedication to attracting and supporting high-caliber students from around the globe, including students from Africa, is demonstrated through its efforts. This growth underscores the university's ongoing commitment to global engagement and its support for students from a wide range of countries across Africa.



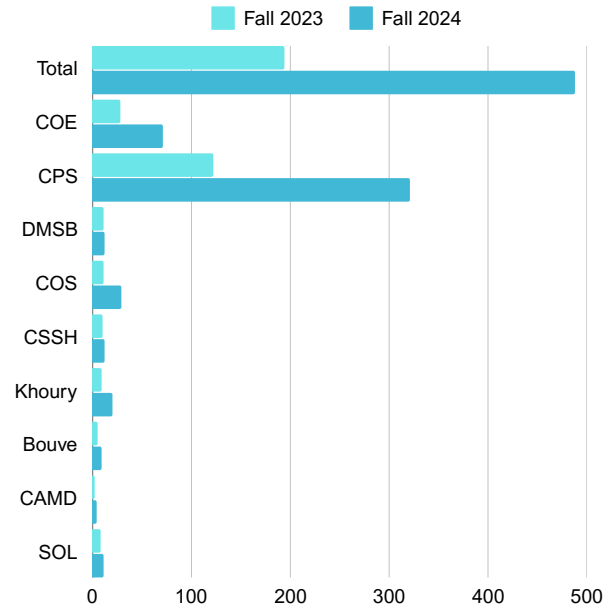
GRADUATE ENROLLMENT

A remarkable increase in graduate enrollment from Africa was experienced by Northeastern University in fall 2024. The total number of applications surged by 83.61% compared to 2023, while enrollments saw an impressive rise of 151.55%. This growth was especially prominent in the College of Professional Studies and the College of Engineering, which both recorded the highest percentage increases and the highest number of enrollments.

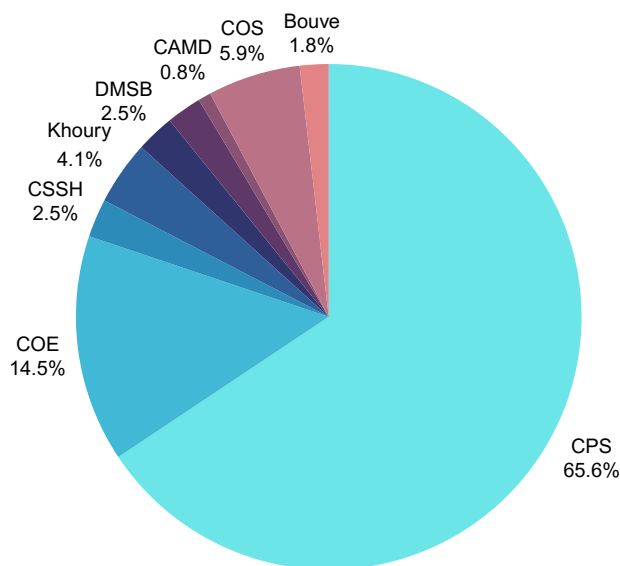
Graduate Applications by Colleges



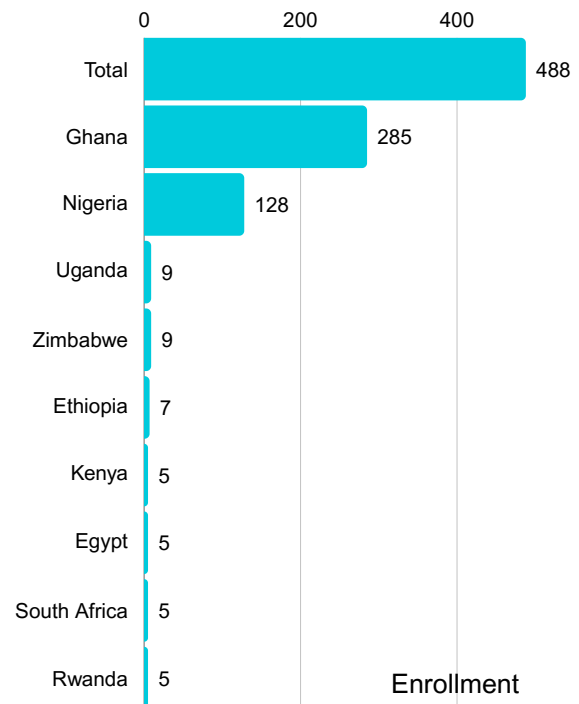
Graduate Enrollment by Colleges



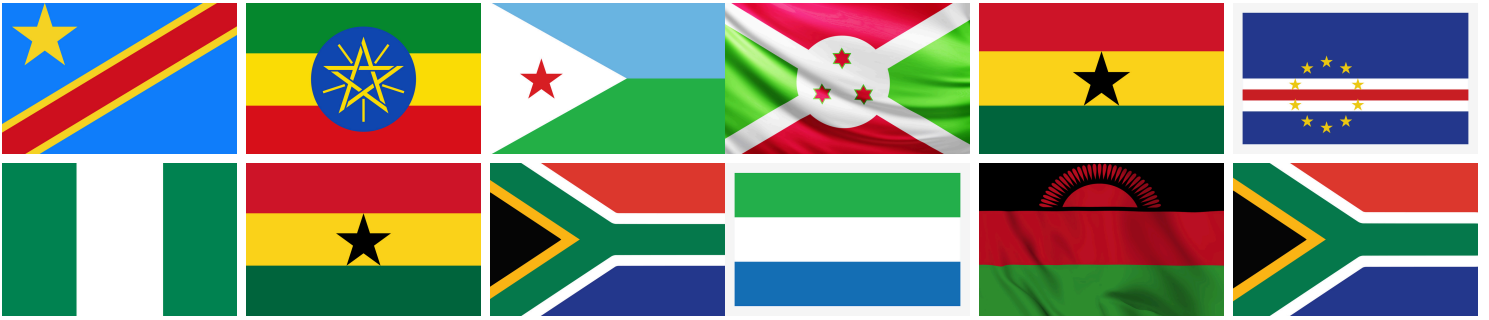
Fall 2024 Enrollment by Colleges



Fall 2024 enrollment top 10 countries

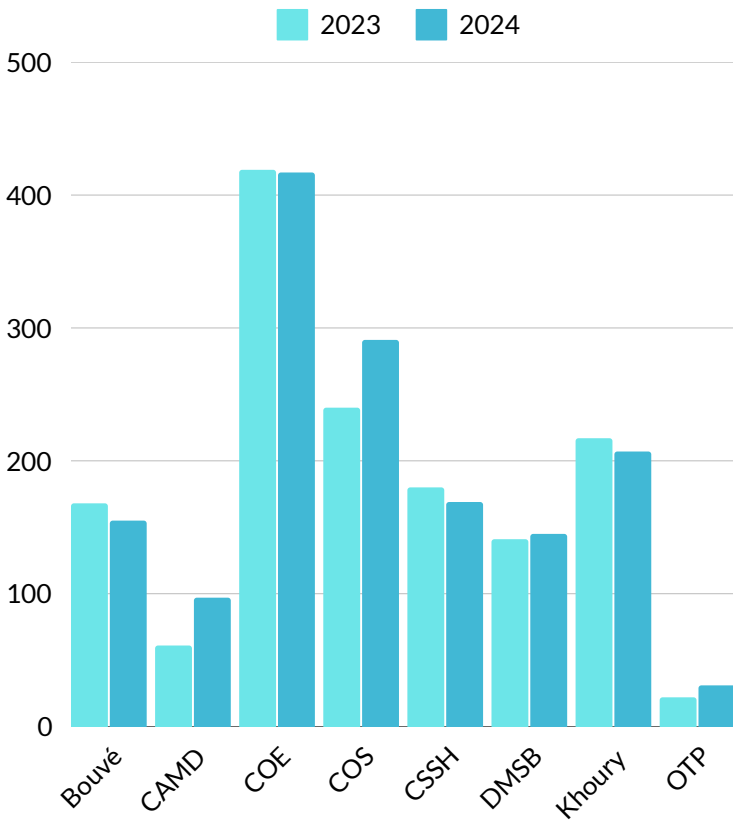


UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT

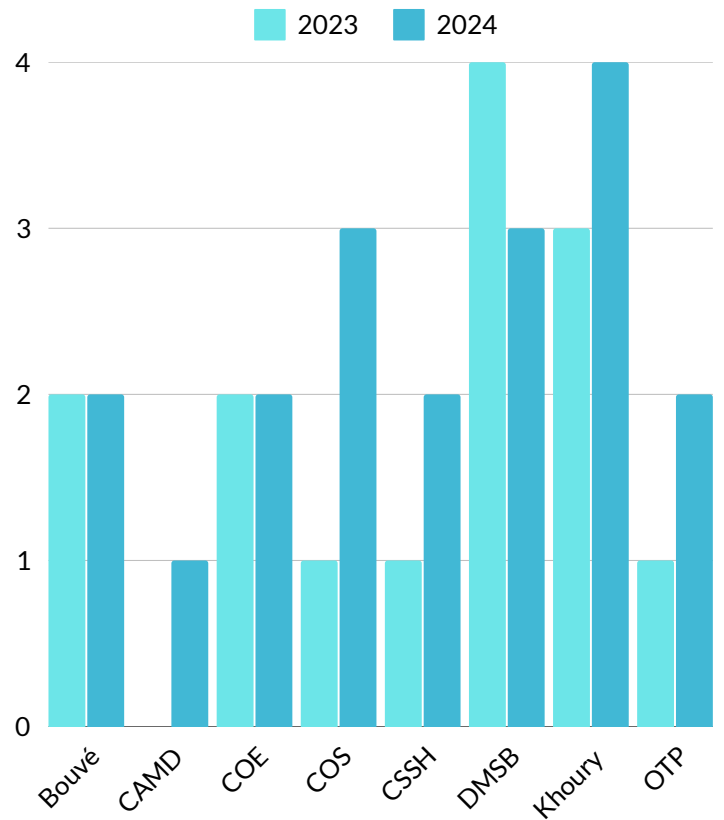


There was a significant increase in undergraduate enrollment from Africa, with applications rising by 35.71% compared to 2023. The enrollments included students from a diverse range of countries: Burundi (1), Cameroon (1), Cape Verde (1), Congo (1), Djibouti (3), Ethiopia (4), Ghana (2), Malawi (1), Nigeria (2), Sierra Leone (1), South Africa (1), and Zambia (1).

Fall Undergraduate Applications by Colleges



Fall Undergraduate Enrollment by Colleges



AFRICA EXPOS

Achieving a significant milestone in its global engagement efforts, Northeastern University saw record-breaking attendance at its 2024 Global Study Expos in Africa. The Expos, held in Accra, Ghana, on October 5 and Lagos, Nigeria, on October 12, attracted over 1,500 and 1,300 students, respectively. This unprecedented turnout underscores the growing interest of African students in international education and highlights the increasing demand for opportunities to connect with global academic institutions.

Supporting these Expos, approximately 25 Northeastern staff from various departments traveled to Africa, contributing their expertise and building meaningful connections with students and institutional partners.

Africa's young and rapidly expanding population represents a key demographic for higher education, and these Expos serve as a crucial platform for building relationships between Northeastern University and prospective students across the continent. By engaging with students eager to explore global learning opportunities, Northeastern continues to strengthen its diverse academic community, welcoming new perspectives and enriching cross-cultural collaboration.

Building on the continued success in Africa, The Global Enrollment Management team at Northeastern is preparing for an even greater impact for 2025. The team will return to Accra, Ghana, and Lagos, Nigeria. Additionally, the team will expand its reach with the introduction of the Kenya Global Study Expo in Nairobi. This strategic expansion reflects the university's commitment to nurturing connections with African students and ensuring access to world-class educational opportunities.



Highlights from the Global Study Expos in Accra, Ghana, and Lagos, Nigeria



EDUCATION

Remaining steadfast in its mission to provide students with transformative global experiences, Northeastern University offers programs like Dialogue of Civilizations (DOC) and Study Abroad. These initiatives immerse students in diverse cultures, equipping them to tackle global challenges. This approach underscores the university's commitment to fostering cross-cultural collaboration, interdisciplinary problem-solving, and international learning.

Dialogue of Civilizations: Dialogue of Civilizations (DOC) are short-term, faculty-led study-abroad programs combining classroom learning with real-world experiences.

The DOC programs in Africa engaged 86 students in 2024, with participation in South Africa (27), Ghana (24), and Egypt (35) representing a significant 37% decrease compared to 2023, where 137 students participated across South Africa (40), Kenya (22), Rwanda (12), Ghana (25), and Egypt (38). This decline in student engagement was primarily attributed to fewer program offerings on the African continent during Summer 2024 compared to the previous year.

Study Abroad Program: Students have the opportunity to study at partner institutions around

the world through the study abroad program. In 2024, seven students participated in study abroad programs across four African countries, marking an increase of four students compared to 2023. Study abroad locations were South Africa (4 students), Morocco (1 student), Kenya (1 student), and Ghana (1 student). Northeastern maintained active partnerships with CIEE South Africa - University of Cape Town, CIEE Legon - University of Ghana, and AMIDEAST's Area & Arabic Language Studies in Rabat, Morocco. In addition, a new partnership was established in 2024 with the School for Field Studies (SFS) Kenya Summer Program, thereby expanding opportunities for student engagement in the region.

DOCs and Study Abroad Programs primarily rely on institutional partnerships and student resources. However, students are eligible to apply for Global Experience Office grants of up to \$1,500.

Looking ahead, Northeastern is reinforcing its commitment to fostering global engagement and cultural understanding through new summer programs in partnership with CIEE – fully-funded Global Seminars in Ghana and Botswana for Pell Eligible students. These two Global Seminar programs are planned for 2025.

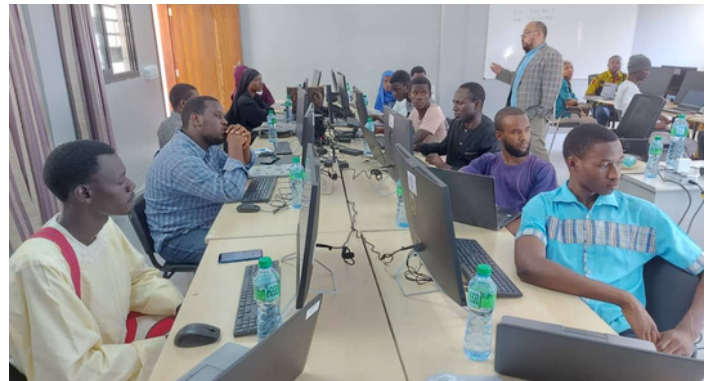
EDUCATION

Northeastern University and Université Gaston Berger (Senegal) Partnership for Academic Exchange

In 2024, a partnership between Northeastern University (NU) and Université Gaston Berger (UGB) was established to foster academic collaboration and cultural exchange. As part of this initiative, an exchange program was launched, enabling four students from each institution to visit and engage in learning experiences in the respective countries.

NU hosted students from UGB through the University Partnership Initiative (UPI) funded by the U.S. Department of State through the Embassy in Dakar. These students participated in a Summer II course on Machine Learning for Smart Agriculture, gaining hands-on experience in cutting-edge technologies. Jonathan Mwaura, a professor at the Khoury College of Computer Sciences from the Roux Institute in Portland, Maine, led the delegation for this collaboration through the University Partnership Initiative (UPI).

A major highlight of the initiative was a Data Science Intensive Workshop in Python, led by Professor Alan Jamieson, Director of Computing Programs at The Roux Institute at Northeastern University and Khoury College of Computer Sciences in Portland, Maine, at UGB in St. Louis, Senegal. This workshop equipped students with essential computational skills, enhancing their capacity to apply data science in real-world agricultural challenges. The collaboration fostered strong friendships and valuable learning experiences between students and faculty from both institutions.



Prof. Alan Jamieson instructing students in Senegal



Students from Université Gaston Berger at the Khoury College of Computer Sciences at Northeastern University

EDUCATION



Africana Studies

The Africana Studies program at Northeastern University, housed under the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, is an interdisciplinary program with a mission of teaching and conducting research in social sciences and humanities fields on the historical and contemporary experiences across the global African Diaspora. It prepares students to explore the increasingly global and interdisciplinary world from diverse perspectives through education, community engagement, and interdisciplinary scholarship.

The impactful work of the Africana Studies Program continues to advance the understanding of African, African American, and African Diaspora experiences. It fosters a deeper appreciation of the continent's rich history, diverse cultures, and contemporary contributions by offering courses that enrich students' understanding and engagement with these topics. In 2024, Africana Studies strengthened its collaborations with African institutions, including existing partnerships with the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research in Tropical Medicine in Ghana and the Miriam Kanana Mubichi Foundation in Kenya. These partnerships

provide students with unique opportunities for international co-ops, enabling them to engage directly with critical global challenges in healthcare, education, and community development. Such initiatives exemplify the program's commitment to fostering global citizenship and mutual learning.

The program also demonstrated its commitment to education by offering courses related to Africa, such as Introduction to African American Studies, Gender in the African Diaspora (as an elective), and Early African American Literature. These courses provide students with a comprehensive understanding of African and African American experiences and their global impact.

Africana Studies continues to emphasize outreach, organizing community events, workshops, and lectures that connect students and faculty with broader conversations on Africa and the African Diaspora. With its unwavering focus on fostering interdisciplinary knowledge, the program remains a vital contributor to the Africa Global Initiative, amplifying the university's role as a hub for impactful research, education, and collaboration within Africa.

RESEARCH



In 2024, Northeastern University faculty made significant contributions to research in Africa across various fields. These research projects not only contribute to the growing body of knowledge but also pave the way for meaningful change in local communities while offering valuable insights to the wider global research community. Notably, some of the faculty members conducting research are both African Professors and Africanists, bringing a profound understanding and personal connection to the region.

Key Research Projects

Sustainable Building: Professors Alpha Arsano (Architecture, CAMD) and Carlos Sandoval Olascoaga (Architecture, CAMD) advanced sustainable building designs in South Africa through the Belmont Forum Africa Research Initiative. Their collaborative work, with partners in South Africa, focused on developing climate-resilient architecture, contributing to the global effort toward environmentally sustainable construction practices and addressing the unique challenges of the region.

Art & Peacebuilding: Prof. Khalid Kodi (Art + Design, CAMD) made significant strides in

arts-based peacebuilding in conflict zones such as South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. His work explores the power of artistic expression in fostering reconciliation and healing in communities affected by conflict. In October, he participated in the Interdisciplinary Symposium: Collaboration and Digital Handover, which focused on discussing the project Nuba Images by Leni Riefenstahl. His contribution highlighted the role of participatory art in preserving cultural identity and fostering resilience in the Nuba Mountains.

Public Health: Prof. Richard Wamai's (Cultures, Societies and Global Studies, CSSH) public health research addressed critical health systems and challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa, while Prof. John Olawepo (Public Health and Health Sciences, BCHS) focused on HIV research in Nigeria. Their work contributes to understanding and addressing pressing health concerns in the region. Additionally, Dr. Brianne Olivieri-Mui (Public Health and Health Sciences, BCHS) contributed to healthcare policies for improving access to healthcare, and Dr. Aleksandra Jakubowski (Health Sciences; Economics, BCHS/CSSH) conducts public health research in Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya.

RESEARCH



Economic Development: Prof. Silvia Prina (Economics, CSSH) and Prof. Nishith Prakash (Public Policy and Economics, CSSH) made significant progress in development economics, focusing on Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Their work has helped improve access to education and economic opportunities, particularly through initiatives like providing bicycles to support girls' school attendance in seven African countries, a model endorsed by the United Nations as a tool for increasing enrollment and empowering women.

Bioengineering: Prof. Lee Makowski (Bioengineering/CCB, COE/COS) who established Bioinnovation Center in Ghana achieved milestones in developing affordable medical technologies. The center, established at Academic City University College, addresses healthcare challenges by designing and distributing devices such as ventilators, originally developed by the late Craig Smallwood, making life-saving solutions more accessible in resource-limited settings. This initiative reflects a commitment to developing medical solutions for challenging environments.

Public Policy: Prof. Maria Ivanova (Public Policy; Director of the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs, CSSH) made significant strides in

advancing sustainable development in Rwanda and Kenya. She focused on launching the PRISMS initiative.

Sociology and Gender: Prof. Valentine Moghadam's (Sociology; International Affairs, CSSH) research on gender and social movements in Africa deepened understanding of the role of gender in social change. Prof. Martha Johnson's (Political Science, Mills) studies on women's political participation in West Africa highlighted the evolving dynamics of representation and governance in the region, particularly in Francophone West Africa, with an interest in the politics of state capacity and foreign aid.

Transitional Justice: Prof. Risa Kitagawa's (Political Science; International Affairs; Faculty Affiliate-GRI; Faculty Affiliate-Global Asian Studies Program, CSSH) research on post-conflict processes in Africa, spanning countries in East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Central America, provided valuable insights into transitional justice. Her work, which uses a variety of methods including survey experiments, text-as-data, process tracing, and interviews, informs policies aimed at reconciliation and peacebuilding in affected regions.

RESEARCH

Combating Plastic Pollution: Northeastern's Expertise Supports African Nations at INC-5

At the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) in Busan, South Korea, which aimed to bring together countries, international organizations, and experts to negotiate a transformative, legally binding treaty to address plastic pollution, a dedicated delegation from Northeastern University showcased their commitment to supporting African nations. The team collaborated closely with the Rwandan and Ethiopian delegations, providing essential policy support.

Led by Prof. Maria Ivanova (Director of the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs; Professor of Public Policy) and supported by Prof. Aron Stubbins (Professor, Marine and Environmental Sciences, Chemistry and Chemical Biology and, Civil and Environmental Engineering), the delegation included three PhD students, two Master's students, and one undergraduate student. The students analyzed iterations of the Chair's text, identifying areas of convergence and divergence, and offering specific, actionable recommendations aligned with Rwanda's priorities.



NU delegation with Dr. Valentine Uwamariya (Minister of Environment, Rwanda)

Exploring Global Creativity

Dr. Nina Sylvanus, Associate Professor of Anthropology, participated in the Fashion, Beauty & Creativity Unbound workshop in Nairobi, Kenya. This event explored African creative industries, global fashion supply chains, and the impact of Web3 on creative labor, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue between academia and industry. Her talk on "Who is Making the Cut? Brands, Labels, and China-Africa Relations", examined the complex dynamics of global fashion and its intersections with African markets.

As the author of *Patterns in Circulation: Cloth, Gender, and Materiality in West Africa*, she has extensively studied the aesthetic and material economy of cloth and its transformation in West Africa. In 2024, she continued her research with a forthcoming book, *Harboring the Future: The Togo Techno-port, Governance, and Global Economics in West Africa*. This work investigates the rise of new ports, logistics infrastructures, and the evolving maritime landscape of West Africa.



Dr. Nina Sylvanus

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Northeastern African Students' Organization (NASO) has been a vital part of Northeastern University's community since its founding in 1989. Built on four core principles-fostering camaraderie among African students, discussing African culture, engaging the broader community, and promoting awareness of African society-NASO has enriched the university experience for countless students. Through events, campaigns, and service initiatives, NASO has become one of the largest and most impactful clubs on campus.

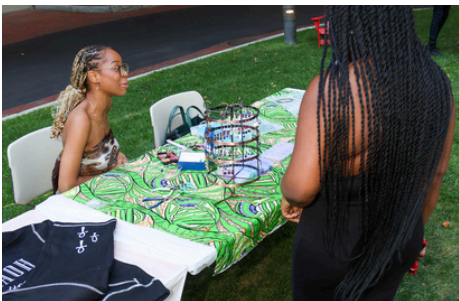
In 2024, NASO reached new heights. The year began with Africa Night, the annual winter showcase celebrating African culture through music, fashion, and talent. The sold-out event featured designers like Kwasi Paul, captivating performances by the NASO Dancers, and headliners Bad Jersey & Mayorkun.

Following Africa Night, the club hosted diverse

general body meetings (GBMs), including a thrift market that raised \$300 for a local shelter and a dance workshop. The semester concluded with an Afrobeat Brunch, where proceeds supported Friends of the Congo, highlighting NASO's commitment to community and global causes.

The fall semester also brought significant achievements. Fall Fest welcomed a promising new freshman class, and NASO launched a new mentorship program to support first- and second-year students navigating college life. The overturning of affirmative action has made this initiative even more critical, as NASO continues to provide a sense of belonging and support for African students.

NASO remains steadfast in its mission ready to tackle challenges and opportunities, continuing to serve as a home for African culture, connection, and advocacy.



Highlights from NASO's events in 2024

STUDENT ACTIVITIES



The African Graduate Student Association (AGSA) at Northeastern University serves as a central hub for academic and social support for african graduate students.

AGSA's mission is to cultivate a dynamic community that emphasizes networking, professional development, advocacy, global engagement, leadership, cultural integration, and academic excellence. Through inclusive initiatives and meaningful collaborations, AGSA strives to create a supportive environment that champions the rights, needs, and successes of its members.

In 2024, AGSA hosted a variety of engaging events for its members. One of the standout initiatives was a virtual fair hosted in partnership with the Office of Recruitment and Marketing. This event allowed current students to share their experiences with prospective international students from Africa, fostering connection and guidance for those considering enrollment.

Social events included a lively Games Night and a celebratory End-of-Year Party, co-hosted with the DSMB Black Graduate Club. Both gatherings created a welcoming environment for fun and networking among members.

The highlight of the year was Career Day, a collaborative effort with the Nigerian Professional Group (NPG). The event featured engaging panel discussions on networking and personal branding, with seasoned professionals from NPG offering invaluable insights. A Science, technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) case competition added an exciting competitive element, with cash prizes awarded to participants. Liberty Mutual Insurance participated by setting up an information table to discuss career opportunities, while NPG provided a free photo booth to help students enhance their LinkedIn profiles.

CO-OP PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

Northeastern University's co-op program is a cornerstone of its commitment to experiential learning and global engagement. Through international co-ops, students gain hands-on experience in their fields of study, addressing global challenges and contributing to meaningful projects. Below are some highlights of co-op experiences in Africa during 2024:

Abigail Binkley (Bouvé): Abigail a Biology and Global Health student conducted research on gender-specific vulnerabilities to visceral leishmaniasis in Kenya. She investigated barriers to treatment faced by women in Baringo County. The findings will be disseminated through academic publications and presentations at conferences like RISE 2025 and the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

Leah Oruko (Bouvé): Leah majoring in Health Sciences completed a co-op with the Research on Multi-Disease and Educational Services (TERMES) Center in Kenya. Her research focused on the challenges faced by residents in Baringo County in accessing treatment for visceral leishmaniasis. The research contributes to the ongoing work of the TERMES Center to

improve healthcare services in the region.

Abigail Williams (COS): Abigail a Marine and Environmental Sciences student conducted maternal health research in Baringo County, Kenya. Supported by the Srinivasan Family Awards, she investigated obstetric fistula, focusing on cultural factors, healthcare access, and knowledge gaps.

Dhwani Bhatt (COE): Dhwani a Chemical Engineering student designed and implemented an underground fixed-dome biogas system at Sadhguru School in Uganda to address its reliance on firewood for cooking. Partnering with Biogas Solutions Uganda Limited, she developed a sustainable solution using organic waste like food scraps and latrine waste to produce clean energy. This project improved health, reduced deforestation, and aligned with the school's sustainability mission.

Saraïna Ulysse (Bouvé): Saraïna a Public Health student researched the impact of community health education on visceral leishmaniasis in Baringo County, Kenya. Her study aims to improve knowledge, practices, and health-seeking behavior. Saraïna plans to publish her results and present them at global conferences, driving further health education efforts.



Northeastern students during their co-op experience in Africa

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Alumni play a vital role in representing the university across Africa through key engagement programs, including the Young Global Leaders program, the Global Envoy Program, and Women Who Empower Ambassadors. These initiatives actively expand alumni presence on the continent by fostering volunteerism, welcoming traveling students and faculty, and sharing their experiences through Northeastern's storytelling platforms. Strengthening alumni representation in Africa remains a strategic priority for Northeastern's Global Leadership Relations team, which oversees and promotes these programs to enhance global connections and impact.

Village of belonging

The Village of Belonging is a dedicated initiative designed to foster connections, provide a space for reflection and dialogue, and unite diverse communities across the university's global network. It serves as a hub where students, alumni, and faculty can engage in meaningful conversations, celebrate cultural heritage, and build lasting relationships.

In 2024, the Village of Belonging organized its first international cultural immersion trip, taking 10 alumni on a 10-day journey through Ghana. Led by Dr. Vanessa Diana Johnson, Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology at Bouvé College of Health Sciences, the group explored Ghana's rich history and traditions, visiting landmarks such

as the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, the Manhyia Palace Museum, and the Bonwire Kente Weaving Center, renowned for its iconic kente cloth.

The trip included a warm welcome from the Bonwire Ashanti Council, who made the visiting group part of the community through a meaningful Naming Ceremony for African descendants into Bonwire Askyiri. Jennifer Barrymore, Founder of the Village of Belonging, was honored with the name Ama Serwaa, symbolizing "a woman born on Saturday who is noble and rich." The experience was further enriched by a dinner hosted by an alumnus at his restaurant in Accra and warm greetings from others upon the group's arrival in Ghana.



Northeastern alumni and faculty immerse in Ghana's rich culture.

AFRICA GLOBAL INITIATIVE WEBSITE

The Africa Global Initiative website underwent a significant refurbishment to enhance its functionality and user experience. The revamped website serves as a comprehensive resource hub, promoting and celebrating Northeastern University's engagement with Africa. It features updated content, improved navigation, and a modern design to better support the initiative's mission and activities.



AGI EXECUTIVE GROUP 2024



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful compilation of this report would not have been possible without the invaluable support and contributions of faculty and students who provided essential data and insights to the Africa Global Initiative (AGI). Their collaboration has been instrumental in documenting the progress and impact of Northeastern University's engagement in Africa.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Northeastern University's Global Experience Office (GEO), Alumni Relations, Enrollment Management, Advancement, and the colleges for sharing valuable information that has strengthened AGI's mission.

Special thanks to the College of Engineering (COE), College of Professional Studies (CPS), D'Amore-McKim School of Business (DMSB), College of Science (COS), College of Social Sciences and Humanities (CSSH), Khoury College of Computer Sciences, and Bouvé College of Health Sciences for their support.

We acknowledge the contributions of the Africa Global Initiative Executive Group.

This Report was prepared through the excellent work of AGI coops Emmanuel Asante (CSSH) and Cynthia Kisuya (CPS).



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