

I AM MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

WHAT IS I AM MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

The Atuu Foundation has partnered up with other organizations within the African Caribbean community and in both the UK and Ghana to present I am my brother's keeper, which is an action-based program created and designed to tackle the ongoing issues within the African Caribbean community regarding our young men. We are aware that identity plays the biggest role in a person's self-development which is why we have chosen to use a more culturally specific approach to ensure it is as successful as possible.



We have identified that there is a disconnect between the generations and want to create a safe space for these young men to use their voices and be heard. I am my brother's keeper is a 15-week program that is not only a life-changing experience but packed with education, qualifications, learning an unlimited transferable skills and have access to an abundance of opportunities but includes a 6 week trip to Ghana where we will be stripping back the layers and taking things back to basics.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THAT

We aim to work closely with these young men with the intention of empowering them by giving them the tools to help build themselves back up with the assistance and support they may need. Learning the importance self, community and core family values additionally teaching the relevance of brotherhood in a time its needed the most.

.By the end of the programme we aim to help these young men build their confidence to get back into education, work or some form of training or trade by focusing on the following areas:

- Authenticity/Culture/ identity
- Building qualifications
- Building references
- mental health awareness
- cooking classes
- Therapy sessions
- Work placements
- Support work
- Financial advise and business management
- Character building
- Work Experience in multiple areas
- Networking
- Engagement
- Mentoring
- Fundraising
- Confidence building

Plus so much more

WHY GHANA

In the UK, people of African Caribbean descent are far more likely to be diagnosed with mental health and sectioned under the mental health act.

Research shows although people do suffer from mental health in predominantly black countries such as Africa and the Caribbean, the symptoms nor the experience is the same with statistics showing to be significantly lower. Here in the UK there are concerning risk factors that contribute to a young black man's quality of life that other races do not have to endure, such as systematic racism and police brutality often starting from the early age of 11 years old.

Being taught from parents that you have to work twice as hard as any other race in education and career choices in combination with being a targeted within the criminal justice system, for example stop and search where black males are 8 times more likely to be stopped and searched than any other race because of the colour of one's skin is also triggering and difficult to grasp but are expected to understand that society has a dislike for them and move with caution.

When a young person sees no positive representations of themselves and feels they are of no value it is no surprise that bad decisions are often made that can be endangering to themselves as well as others. What makes it worse is they are living upto the expectations that are placed upon them before they are even born.

Currently 32% of young black men under the age of 18 are taking up the prison population, serving longer sentences than other races

Around 50% of mental health starts from the age of 14 years old and although it is often genetic, environmental factors are also said to be the cause.

We want to use this project as a prevention and or intervention getting our young men back on track and with a healthy mind state.

Taking these young people to Ghana as part of the project creates a safe space out of their normal environment where they can be themselves whilst learning about the origins of their history and culture. Demonstrating what a positive community with people look like them looks like, whilst implementing all of the resources we have been able to pool together. This will help to build up the confidence and courage to build stronger and lasting relationships with people within their own community in the UK, build up their self esteem and ultimately take pride in their identity. This will not only benefit the young people on the trip but the rest of the community making it a safer and more productive environment for all.

This project is our direct response to what is currently happening within our community and our call to action.

ABOUT GHANA

Ghana is a country located in West Africa, with a population of over 31 million people and 70 plus ethnic groups.

Ghana has strong ties with the people of the Caribbean as many of our predecessors came from West Africa. There you will see the similarities and the routes many of our ancestors had taken for us to be where we are today.

Present day Ghana gained its independence on 6th March 1957, changing its name from the Golden Coast.

The first president since its independence was Kwame Nkrumah, well known for pushing the narrative for people of the diaspora to visit the motherland as he personally experienced the oppression in the United States.



Over the years many of our activists travelled to Ghana such as:

W. E. B Du Bois, Julian Bond, Malcolm X, Muhammad Ali, Marcus Garvey, Barack and Michelle Obama, Maya Angelou to mention a few.

Since 2019 Ghana has pushed the year of the return for those of the diaspora to connect with their roots and identity and more recently waived the visa for those who have a Jamaican passport and are encouraged to settle there.

There are those that say the Jamaican flag was a tribute to the original flag of the Akan's golden stool, and that the word Jamaica in twi translates to " I think we are lost here"



ABOUT KWAHU

We will be travelling in and around Ghana, but for the most part of the trip we will be staying in the Eastern region (Kwahu), ruled by the paramount king Akuamoah Agyapong II



Also referred to as kwahuhene

Abene is where the seat of paramuncy is held and where the Atuu Foundation has started the process of development raising funds for clean water, agriculture materials and library. The I am my brothers keeper volunteers will have the opportunity to help build up the foundation of the project leaving their footprint ingrained on the motherland.

ABOUT NKAWKAW

Although all participants will be travelling to different villages within the region of Kwahu, they will reside in a town called Nkawkaw.

Nkawkaw is the capital of Kwahu and has access to all necessities that maybe needed. Its is a very friendly and multi ethnic town with lots of things to do to keep one occupied 7 days a week.

It is also home of the Okwahu United football team which is the paramount Kings team.

Here are a few of the endless amount of activities these young men will be engaged in are:

- Agriculture
- Beach clean ups
- Museums
- Historical sites
- Feeding the community
- Teaching
- Cave climbing and mountain hiking
- Camping
- Soap making
- How chocolate is made

FUN FACTS

- Kwahu mean go and die due to history of wars and the regions natural forestry.

- Kwahu has the largest hotel in Africa, ranking the 50th largest hotel in the world in a small town called Nkwatia. The hotel is called Rock City.
- Kwahu is connected to the west shore of Lake Volta which is the largest man made lake in the world.
- Kwahu has the highest habitable elevation in the country (abetifi)

The full itinerary will be provided to those that have been successfully chosen to partake in the project. .

All participants will have to go through a mandatory db's check and pay £250 contribution fee to put towards the travel and accomodation fee for the trip Ghana.

Having any criminal cautions or convictions will not necessarily mean you will not be able to attend the programme dependant on what it is. Please do not let that deter you from applying if interested.

Does this sound like something you or someone you would refer benefit from this project?

Then please send your expression of interest to info@theatuufoundation.org for the application process or contact Keili Bent on 07936637898 for further enquiries.

In the meantime please feel free to do your own research on the information given and locations mentioned in Ghana. Please show your support and follow our journey on our social media platforms on I am my brothers keeper official.

Limited spaces available!

All submissions must be in by 15th February 2023