



Investors, entrepreneurs met in Silicon Valley to Discuss African Investment, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Human Capital

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2020, Silicon Valley - From January 23-25, African Diaspora Network (ADN) convened more than 300 entrepreneurs, investors, and innovators from across the globe at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, California, for its fifth annual African Diaspora Investment Symposium (ADIS2020). This flagship conference, located in the innovation and entrepreneurial capital of the world, seeks to build bridges between Africans, Diasporans, and friends of Africa, with the goal of inspiring participants to be agents of change and active contributors to Africa's development.

Launching into a new year and decade, ADN engaged a record number of participants with the 2020 theme, "Defining an Investment Framework for Africa." For the first time, African Diaspora Network hosted five entrepreneurial pipelines, cohorts of budding African entrepreneurs, for exclusive access to Silicon Valley investors. These rising stars include Stanford Seed Transformation Network Members, Segal Family Foundation African Visionary Fellows, Mastercard Scholars, Harambeans, and ADN's 2020 Builders of Africa's Future Fellows.

Through the Builders of Africa's Future (BAF) Awards, African Diaspora Network honored 11 Africa-based entrepreneurs running early stage businesses addressing Africa's unique needs. Now in its third year, the program has partnered with eBay and the Miller Center for Entrepreneurship at Santa Clara University to provide mentorship and a full-day workshop to help the awardees deliver business pitches at the symposium. ADN recognized Helen Kim, former VP of Product Operations at eBay, who significantly catalyzed the BAF program through the 2019 eBay Global Give grant.

The Thursday reception sparked opportunities for networking and engagement before two full days of insightful dialogue around investment and innovation in Africa. Day one of the symposium focused on public-private partnerships as a continuation of ADN's 2019 regional Impact & Innovation Series convening hosted in Washington, D.C. The Honorable Joseph Mucheru, EGH, current Kenyan Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology, delivered a keynote address touching on Kenya's success in increasing accountability and transparency through technology, spurring dialogue on the role of government and businesses to create streamlined and sustainable systems in the areas of finance, technology, energy, and innovation across the continent.





Day two explored how investment and entrepreneurship could be applied to create thriving ecosystems in health care, agriculture, and education. African Luminaire Keynote Speaker Mimi Alemayehou, Managing Director at Black Rhino Group, spoke about the bright future of the continent through increased trade between Africa and the United States, highlighting Rwanda and Ethiopia as countries that have established more favorable policy environments toward women. ADN present Mimi Alemayehou with the inaugural African Diaspora Luminaire Award, which recognizes a distinguished Diasporan who has made high-level impact on a global scale.

Almaz Negash, founder and executive director of African Diaspora Network, organized the inaugural African Diaspora Investment Symposium in 2016, as a result of having participated in numerous high-level convenings where very few Africans or Diasporans were present in conversations on Africa. The symposium has drawn over 1300 participants from Africa, Europe, Canada, and the United States over its five editions. "ADN has become the center of human capital related to the African Diaspora that live in the U.S., but also to create a support mechanism for those coming to the U.S.," says Joshua Ghaim, PhD, former Chief Technology Officer of Johnson and Johnson, founder of Ignite brands, and ADN board member.

Negash says, "I remain thankful for the speakers, the attendees, the sponsors, the board, the team, and the community as a whole who made this possible. This work, this convening is about the people. We are humbled by the enthusiasm of all of our participants. Their energy, atmosphere, and ideas have made this our best symposium yet." Plans for the sixth annual symposium are already in motion and will be held from January 20-22, 2021. Please reach out to info@africandiasporanetwork.org for more information.

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About African Diaspora Network:

African Diaspora Network is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization. Our mission to harness and engage the intellectual, financial, philanthropic and entrepreneurial capacity of Africans and friends of Africa in support of economic and social development across Africa. Since 2010, the African Diaspora Network (ADN) has energized collaboration among Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, philanthropists and African diasporans to uplift its local community towards the benefit of Africa. ADN is dedicated to providing virtual and physical forums to accelerate access to resources that foster partnership, knowledge sharing, and advance investment opportunities.

ADIS Sponsors: The County of Santa Clara, Segal Family Foundation, Mastercard Foundation, eBay, Johnson & Johnson, Conrad N. Hilton, Hugh Stuart Center Charitable, United States African Development Foundation, SAP, The Africa-America Institute, King Baudouin Foundation United States, Stanford Seed, Atlas Network, EY, IDP Foundation Inc., Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Facebook,





Harambeans, William H Cilker Family Foundation, Twum Djin, Dawit Habtezhgi, Hugh Molotsi, Abbey Omokhodion, Joshua Ghaim, Charlie Adams, David Wilde, Mr. Terry Gannon & Mrs. Carolyn Gannon, Duncan Goldie-Scot, and Regga Tekeste.

ADIS Partners: USAID, State Department, Frugal Innovation Hub, Miller Center, Lofty Inc. Allied Partners Ltd., Baobab Consulting, Ashesi University Foundation, and American Homebuilders of West Africa.

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