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THE
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SPOTLIGHT

FROM

DIASPORA
INVESTMENT
DESK. GIPC



Lorraine
Wright, MBE

ISSUE 9



Lorraine Wright, MBE

DID Kindly introduce yourself

RB My name is Lorraine Wright MBE (Chief Side Hustler). I am the UK Strategic Partnerships Manager for Community Partnerships at Meta (Facebook) and alongside that I am a Speaker where I largely speak on bridging the gap between the Diaspora and Ghana and own multiple businesses in UK and Ghana!

RB

Surrounded by some of the world's most curious minds, I had no choice but to level up! I went back to the Investment bank and landed a role overseeing the tech that supported the bank's social impact and community management efforts. That was the steppingstone for me at where I am now at Meta!

At Meta, my role is to lead a UK Accelerator program for community leaders to help them to turn ideas they have for their communities into impactful ones. Alongside my day job I'm committed to just leveraging my passions, gifts and talents to help others. For instance, in the UK, I run an annual University Gospel Choir of the Year competition which is one of the largest and recognized gospel programs in the UK. The competition was borne out of a passion and the gift I have for convening people together. The competition led to us starting a music talent agency booking clients like X Factor, Britain's Got Talent and the Voice and subsequently led to me receiving an MBE from the late Queen Elizabeth II.

DID How long have you been working for?

RB I have been working in both the corporate and entrepreneurial fields for more than a decade.

DID What was your motivation for starting this job?

RB My life-long passion has always been to make a difference in the wider communities and use my gift and talents to help enable communities to become more impactful. I began my career working as a Director for an Investment bank, midway through I began to look at ways I can do more for the society at large and decided to do an Exec MBA at the University of Oxford.

DID What sector of Ghana's economy is your job focused on?

RB In Ghana, my jobs are very diverse as most Ghanaians. I am the owner of a Beauty brand and salon based in Labone, Accra called -Liona Nails.

RB Liona Nails is a Luxury Boutique Nail & Beauty Salon and Spa that delivers high standard and hygienic treatments at affordable prices. We are also one of the first brands to introduce Magnetic Eyelashes into Ghana under our brand Liona Lashes Official.

I also mentor and coach members of the diaspora who are looking to start SMEs in Ghana and connect them with ecosystem players.

I am also an agent for the property development and construction company Mocka Living. We offer consultancy and construction for those looking to build or renovate in Ghana. Additionally, I am an Executive for the Agritech Start-up - Grow For Me - which allows anyone to farm from the comfort of their own home by sponsoring experienced small holder farmers to grow on their behalf. Grow For Me is a web based Agricultural crowdfunding platform that funds farmers to scale and grow more crops, using the income received from interested sponsors. Sponsors would make a fair profit when crops are sold to our accredited off taker partners or on the Ghana Commodity Exchange. Lastly, I am the founder of University Gospel Choir of the Year (UGCY) in Ghana and UK, engaging university-based choirs to showcase their talents on a national scale. We welcome all universities to submit their choirs for consideration and we welcome all brands and media houses to support us!



What informed your decision to work in the UK?

DID

I was born and bred in the UK where I spent most of my early years. The UK has helped to provide me with solid world class education and corporate experience whilst being able to build ecosystem partners who are at the forefront of the world's leading innovations. My passion and love however firmly remains in Ghana where the opportunities are greater!

RB

What are the challenges you encountered while navigating the UK's business ecosystem as a Ghanaian and how did you overcome them?

DID

Initially, my challenge was representation, finding people who looked like me to show me the way to navigate my career through the corporate glass ceilings. Over the years I have managed to overcome this by building a solid network, having a good and credible name and also, being able to ask the right questions to get the answers you need. It is also important to leave the door open for others to allow more individuals who look and speak like ourselves to enter similar spaces.

RB

What notable successes have you chalked since you started your career?

DID

Establishing Liona Nails and launching my own Lash label/line- Liona Magnetic Lashes.

RB

- Over the years, I have been named a Black British Business Award Rising Star, a Ghanaian UK based achievement (GUBA) Community Champion and a Future of Ghana 30 under 30 Pioneer. I was also named a Rising Star in the 2018 Powerlist of the UK's most influential people of African or African Caribbean Heritage.

- My most notable achievement of all has been receiving the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) from the late HRM Queen Elizabeth II in 2022 .

What investments have you made in Ghana; what are the positive outcomes so far?

DID

Liona Nails
- I have over the years managed to create jobs for more than 50 people

RB

Grow For Me
- We have engaged thousands of sponsors from across the diaspora and locally in Ghana who have collectively crowdfunded millions of cedis being invested in Ghanaian Agriculture.

Kindly send a word of encouragement to other diasporas looking to return home or invest in the limitless opportunities the country presents.

DID

The time is now to help develop our nation through investments, businesses and other opportunities. There is no better time than this. It may be tough at the beginning but there is a network and pool of resources that you can tap into to achieve your successes. You can connect with me @lorrainehwright on IG.

RB

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