

# Travels to Accra

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Volume 1

Winter Travel Team

December 17th-20th

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In front of the Black Star Gate which commemorates Ghana's independence from the British Empire in 1957.

## Issue I Updates

- Flight to Accra
- Hotel stay in Accra
- Meeting Zack
- Driving to Ullo



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# Friday, December 17th

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## Matt Dunning

VP Programs, Environmental Engineering

This is Matt Dunning, reporting from the Hunters Royal hotel in Accra. Everyone is doing well apart from exhaustion from travel.

For most of us, our day started at 4am on December 16 in Ames. When I was at the O'hare airport for lunch, I knew it was my last day in the United States for 3 weeks. I naturally went to McDonald's for lunch to indulge in a Big Mac and double cheese-burger. Our flights would take a total of 22 hrs without considering customs or reaching a hotel.

Customs were relatively painless with the exception of a confusion involving a yellow fever vaccination card. We met our driver,

Mike, and our friend Mofida outside the airport and exchanged dollars for cedis at the mall across the street. Out of all the fast food places popular in America, KFC was the only one we saw throughout the day.

Like the rest of the travel team, our driver had no idea where he was going. It took us 2 hours to reach the hotel 6 miles from the airport. It was an unexpected way to get introduced to the bustling streets of Accra. Several times, we had street vendors approach our van selling their goods. Motor scooters can also drive wherever they want.

We are ending our day eating dinner at the restaurant next to the hotel. Attached is a picture of the hotel and our travel team in Dulles International Airport.

Thank you for reading!



Travel Team in Dulles International Airport

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# Saturday, December 18th

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Joe Kim

EWB President, Industrial Engineering

Hey y'all, this is Joe. Today was our first real full day in Ghana and also our last day in Accra before we head up to Ullo tomorrow. We started the day at 8am by having a breakfast of toast, pineapple, (which was amazing) an omelette, sausage links, and coffee. Since we were just in Accra with no technical work to do, we decided to do some "touristy" stuff. So, after all of us were done with breakfast, we got in the van and started heading out to visit some key areas in Accra. Our first stop was at the DuBois center market, which honors the activists W.E.B. DuBois and the work that he did both in the U.S. and all of Ghana and Pan-Africa. The museum we went to was his house, and it had a ton of great pictures, monuments, books, and other items that he owned. Since most of us only knew about his work in the U.S., it was cool so see how big of an impact he had on both Africa and the rest of the world. After finishing with the museum and briefly exploring the small market, we headed out to our next big stop, Independence Park. This place has a giant arch with a star at the top which opens to a wide open plaza with bleachers on the side. We climbed to the top of the arch and got a great view of Accra, and also got a mini lesson from a volunteer guide from atop there named Francis. It was a pretty informative and inspirational visit, but we had to move on to our next stop, the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial, which commemorates Ghana's first president. There wasn't too much aside from a tomb memorial, but we did see chickens cross the road. By this time, we were all starving, so we agreed to get food. We ended up at a restaurant called Abajo Arts and Culture Cafe which had jollof, fried plantains, fried rice, red bean stew, and coconut water. (food here similar to everywhere else was incredible)

After lunch, we headed to a local beach where we dipped our toes in the water, threw a few rocks in the ocean, watched some crabs scoot around, and collected seashells which was a great way to decompress after a busy day. We were all so pooped that we decided to head back to the hotel. Shortly after this, we headed to a local restaurant recommended by Mike, our driver, where we had fried rice, some with beef sauce and some without. Since this meal was not too long after lunch, we were stuffed before we could finish. We headed back to the hotel, chilled for a little, then went out to chat with Dr. Bruce, a professor at University of Ghana from Ullo, and a colleague of Dr. Maier. He had a lot of informative things to say about the government and what it means to be a Chief. After talking with him a while, we had to go to bed and pack for our 7:30am flight to Tamale. All in all, it was great but also a very tiring day. We are all ready to get started in Ullo.



Visited the EWB DuBois Home and Cultural Center

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# Sunday, December 20th

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**Jennifer Culver**  
**Biological Systems Engineering**

The day started off in Accra with an early 7:30 flight that brought us to Tamale. Once we landed we were greeted by Zack where we promptly departed on a long van ride. The ride consisted of lots of music, reading, writing, snacking, and what seemed to be a contest of who can nap the most (I think we can all agree that Joe wins- that man can sleep through just about anything). Around 12:30 we stopped in Sawla for lunch and then we are back on the road continuing the trek North.

During the van ride we tried counting the number of speed bumps along the road. Quite frankly- we weren't very good at it. To say there was a lot is a massive understatement- the number was well over 200. After great speculation and heated discussion the final tally landed at 239.

Around 5:30 we arrived in Ullo where we were greeted by a bunch of friendly faces ready to welcome us to their home. The house we are staying in is newly built and is a beautiful spot for us to set up base for the next few weeks. We enjoyed dinner together and are taking the evening to get settled and spend time together as a team.



Nightly team huddle to debrief about work achieved, share about highs, lows and wows of the day, and review planned work for tomorrow.



We have ceremoniously presented the pre con drawings to Chief Hassan and community leaders.

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