



## **HBCU-ACC Student Spotlight: Ghanaian American Student Journalist Offers a Unique Perspective on Kenyan Protests**

**Washington DC, July 1, 2024** - Around the world, protesters are taking to the streets to express their outrage with the Ruto Administration. For Akofa Bruce, these protests have provided a strategic opportunity to take what she has learned in the classroom and apply it in the real-world. An undergraduate student journalist at Howard University, Bruce hopes to pursue a career as a foreign correspondent covering the Africa beat. Raised between Nairobi and New York, Bruce knew that she could offer a unique perspective on the protests and provide the youth with a platform to make their voices heard. So, she grabbed her camera and notepad and headed out into the field on her own initiative a few weeks ago.

### **Who is Akofa Bruce?**

Bruce is a Political Science Major and Women, Gender and Sexualities Studies Minor from the Bronx, New York and Accra, Ghana. Much of her adolescence was spent in Nairobi, and she maintains strong contacts in the country. As a rising senior attending Howard University, Bruce is

committed to bridging networks between HBCU students and their counterparts in Africa and the global African Diaspora.

This semester, Bruce was selected to serve as the [President of the HBCU-Africa Correspondents Corps](#). Her presidency positioned her to serve as the bridge between the 2024 cohort and the respectable journalists and experts they interacted with. Her outreach efforts gave the cohort opportunities to learn from people working in the professional sector with outlets such as Mail & Guardian, Nation Media Group, Reuters, The New York Times, Vox, and more. Bruce executed an early understanding of analytic journalism that served as a basis for her international reporting and commentary. She frequently involved herself in support work for the global public relations course and assisted her peers throughout the program in improving performance for deliverables.

Another notable semester highlight for Bruce was being selected as a finalist for the [Du Bois Data Lab](#) organized between the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism (CUNY) and the Howard University Center for Journalism & Democracy. Through the intensive data journalism program, Bruce gained experience in interpreting and mapping data to produce stories that are often buried in the numbers. Her data journalism skills now provide her with the ability to recognize patterns and trends to expose structural inequalities and racial disparities across many fields like healthcare and public safety.

She has worked as an Ignite Fellow at Teach for America, participated in the [inaugural Akan Twi language course](#), and served as a member of the African Students' Association executive board. Among her honors and awards, Bruce was recently named the 2024 Correspondent of the Year of the HBCU-Africa Correspondents Corps.

### **What others are saying about Akofa Bruce.**

Bruce is widely respected among her peers. This is evident when you speak with her fellow participants in the HBCU-Africa Correspondents Corps. Mya Hall is another undergraduate student at Howard University. On her account, Akofa has demonstrated “exceptional leadership serving as president of this year’s HBCU-ACC program; she has demonstrated unwavering consistency, meticulous diligence, and thoughtful consideration in providing assistance to every participant.” Nkulu Ndlovu, a journalism honors student at Stellenbosch University (South Africa), echoes that endorsement. Per Ndlovu, Akofa was never “panicked nor confused. She always had

a solution.” Bruce’s efforts to maintain a strong path of open communication as she interacted with students from multiple universities speaks to the importance of strategy and coordination as a leader.

### **Why Akofa Bruce Offers a Unique Perspective.**

Akofa’s decision to cover the protests is not only about reporting facts; it is about storytelling that transcends borders. Here’s why her perspective matters:

1. **Unique Voice:** In a media landscape often dominated by Western perspectives, Akofa’s voice stands out. Her storytelling resonates with authenticity, empathy, and a commitment to truth.
2. **Cultural Insight:** Akofa’s upbringing in Kenya provides a lens through which she interprets the protests. She understands the nuances, the historical context, and the emotions driving Kenyans to take to the streets.
3. **Intersectionality:** As an HBCU-Africa correspondent, Akofa bridges the gap between African diaspora communities and their homeland. Her reporting connects the dots between global issues and local activism.
4. **Youth:** Akofa is no stranger to leadership in young African communities and understands the importance amplifying her generations cries for autonomy.

These qualities jump out when you look over her recent [photo spread](#). These images covering the June 23 protest in Washington, DC focus on making the exciting and meaningful presence of Kenyans across the diaspora known.

### **What Lies Ahead for Akofa Bruce.**

Akofa’s articles go beyond headlines. She dives into the heart of the protests, capturing personal narratives, interviewing activists, and shedding light on the human impact. Her upcoming piece promises to be a powerful exploration of resilience, and the fight for justice. Growth and community are central to Akofa in her journalism journey, “As I develop as a journalist, I wish to use my life experiences to inform my work. Just as I continue to grow and evolve, I look for those who are growing and evolving with me, I look for fellow journalists, writers, artists, and general

creatives who care about marginalized voices. I wish to connect and work with more people who want to highlight the importance of these lives and stories.”

Moving forward with her career for her Senior year, under the provider ISA, Akofa Bruce will be studying abroad this upcoming fall in San José, Costa Rica. She will be a student at Universidad Veritas under the Environmental Studies, Health Care, Liberal Arts & Spanish Language Program. As she immerses herself in a new culture and language, she will grow her linguistic and photography skills while gaining a deeper understanding of political, cultural, and social dynamics in Central America.

Akofa stated, “While growing up in Kenya, I attended an international school. I have always been surrounded by people from different cultures than my own and I continue to invite that into my adulthood. I’m excited about the people I will get to learn with and from in Costa Rica as I continue to challenge myself through my education.”

As she is studying abroad, she intends on continuing her participation with campus organizations virtually. She will be serving on the IPALS Executive Board as a Graphics Chair. She believes it is extremely important for them to make use of social media to remain accessible to students and their supporters who cannot reach them on the ground. She stated that “Through working on graphics for IPALS, I get the chance to develop my graphic design skills in a meaningful environment.” But she does not plan to stop there. She will also be an Editor for Sterling Notes: The Literary Arts Journal of the Sterling Allen Brown English Society at Howard University.

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