HHC student selected for Pickering Fellowship

Fellowship will provide funding for Isak Osagyefo Nti Asare as he prepares to enter U.S. Department of State Foreign Service.

At just 22, recent Indiana University graduate Isak Osagyefo Nti Asare already has lived and studied in more countries than most people visit in a lifetime.

He graduated with highest distinction from IU’s College of Arts and Sciences on Saturday, May 7, 2011, with a bachelor of arts degree and majors in political science and linguistics, a minor in African languages (Swahili and Akan), and an undergraduate certificate in African studies.

Nti Asare learned earlier in May that he also had been selected for a Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship, which provides funding to participants as they prepare academically and professionally to enter the U.S. Department of State Foreign Service. He will receive $40,000 for each of the two years of his graduate program, as well as stipends for participation in domestic summer internships that follow each academic year.

"Isak’s biography and record of accomplishments already read like that of a distinguished ambassador, so it is fitting he has won a Pickering Fellowship," said IU Bloomington Hutton Honors College Dean Matt Auer. "Everyone at the Hutton Honors College is ecstatic for Isak."

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, Nti Asare has lived and studied in Dubai and Sharjah (both in the United Arab Emirates), Estonia, Mexico, Azerbaijan, and Ghana. He also speaks five languages — one of the reasons IU has been such an ideal fit.

"I knew I wanted to do African studies, and the strength of the African languages program here was a definite plus — the foreign languages in general at IU are impressive," Nti Asare said. "I don't know of any other school that offers as many languages, and at such a high level, as IU."

Nti Asare attended high school in Laramie, Wyo., and fell in love with the IU Bloomington campus on a senior-year swimming recruiting trip.

"It was the first recruiting trip I went on, and then all the others just didn't seem right," he said. "I think Herman B Wells once said that Indiana was always a place where you could 'feel imaginative,' and that was very much the case. I came here and felt at home. I felt imaginative, like I could do anything I wanted to do here."

One of Nti Asare’s mentors is Professor A.B. Assensoh, director of graduate studies and admissions for IU Bloomington’s Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies. Assensoh said that along with many other faculty members, he and his wife, Office for Women’s Affairs Dean (continued on page 6)
Most IUB awards go to HHC students

2010–11 is no different.

During 2010–11 Hutton Honors College students garnered many awards. Again.

Esther Udeuehi, ’11, who majored in chemistry and mathematics, was named a Rhodes Scholar for 2011. She was one of 32 Americans selected for the prestigious academic award. (See story about Udeuehi and read our February 2011 electronic newsletter: www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/alumni/Feb11.pdf) •

Isak Osagyeo Nti Asare, ’11, was selected for a Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship, which provides funding to participate in their professional and internationally focused academic courses. (See story on page 1.)

HHC rising senior Kip Hutchins, 19, has been awarded a 2011 Beinecke Scholarship that he can apply to the graduate school of his choice. Hutchins plans to use the award to further his Mongolian studies following his projected May 2012 graduation. (See story on page 5.)

See these stories on our website:
• Rising junior Kent Griffith and rising senior Kimberly Long received the 2011 $7,500-per-year Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship: www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/news/news1011/goldpalm.php
• HHC students also were honored for several other campus and national awards. These included the Herman B Wells Senior Recognition Award; five Elvis J. Stahr Distinguished Senior Awards; and Beinecke Scholarship (see winter 2011 newsletter story at www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/alumni/Feb11.pdf) — the second Rhodes for IU in as many years. Udeuehi and her remarkable classmates, Isak Asare, Christian Hines, Elizabeth Bercovitz, and Laura Goins earned Elvis J. Stahr Distinguished Senior Awards, and HHC senior Erin Chapman took home the Herman B Wells Senior Recognition Award. Inside the pages of this newsletter, read about winners of such prestigious honors as the Beinecke Scholarship, Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship, and Boren Scholarship, among others. We are delighted for these awardees and proud they are joining you as HHC alumni.

If only Indiana University’s economic fortunes could be as bright as the futures of its top students. IU Bloomington faces more than $10 million in cuts from the state, and students and their families continue to struggle with uncertain economic times. For the great majority of HHC students, the financial pressures of attending IU are moderated by substantial merit grants, visits with distinguished guests, and honors living arrangements enriched their own experiences at IU. Indiana University’s academic year is approximately 34 weeks, but fundraising to support great students is a year-round endeavor. Your contribution is appreciated, and giving is as easy as clicking the “Give Now” button located at the bottom of our home page at www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/. Your investments pay off. The proof: HHC students overachieve in the classroom, the studio, in leadership roles on and off campus, and their accomplishments are recognized by some of the toughest judges around, including Beinecke, Pickering, and Rhodes!

Support the HHC — brick spaces filling up

More than 500 bricks engraved with the names of HHC supporters greet visitors in the arched walkway leading to the Hutton Honors College on the corner of Woodlawn Avenue and Seventh Street. The engraved, regimental-red bricks, supplied by Belden Brick Co., measure 4 inches wide by 8 inches long. They bear the names of families, individuals, organizations, and in some cases, favorite phrases or salutations. Many parents buy bricks to honor their HHC students. Current students, alumni, and other supporters of the HHC have purchased bricks to establish their own legacy or to memorialize a loved one.

Order your brick soon. Fewer than 160 spaces remain. For more information about the HHC brick program, or to place an order, contact the IU Foundation at (812) 855-8311 or (800) 558-8311, or e-mail iuf@indiana.edu.
Dream team

HHC joins Indianapolis D.R.E.A.M. Alive Inc. in administering an afterschool program at Indianapolis's Shortridge High School

Since its founding in 1864, Shortridge High School in Indianapolis has known both good times and bad. In the 1950s, it ranked among the best public schools in the nation and boasted such famous alumni as Richard Lugar, ’50, and Kurt Vonnegut Jr., ’40. Competition by North Central High School for academically strong students, de jure and de facto racial segregation, busing, and budget cuts were setbacks for Shortridge in later years. After closing in the early 1980s, Shortridge reopened as a middle school, and in 2009, as a magnet high school for law and public policy. Today, approximately two-thirds of Shortridge students are African American, with white and Hispanic students making up the remaining third.

The Hutton Honors College joins Indianapolis award-winning nonprofit organization D.R.E.A.M. Alive Inc. in administering an afterschool program at Shortridge. In the fall of 2011, HHC students Alex Carlisle, Kae Grossman, and Charlie Zhang will administer an SAT tutoring course with approximately 30 high school juniors. The goal is to help Shortridge students improve their standardized test scores and earn admission to college.

Here's what the new tutors have to say about their participation in the program:

Alex Carlisle, ’14 (English): “This tutorship will enable me to compel social change (if only on a minute scale) by applying my talents to helping achieve educational equality for a number of disadvantaged students while challenging myself in a novel way.”

Kae Grossman, ’13 (English, political science, and history): “This tutorship is a very real chance to make a difference in the lives of younger students. I am looking forward to meeting the students that I will be working with and developing this exciting program.”

Charlie Zhang, ’12 (finance and economics): “I received the Cox Research Scholarship to attend IU partly because of my performance on the SAT. I’ve had a great experience here and have been searching for a way to help others gain similar opportunities. In this program I will be able to help high school students who are in a similar situation as the one I faced and help them achieve their full potential.”

ALUMNI PROFILE: JACOB SHERRY, BA’11

Filmmaker accomplishes the improbable

Many people dream of making a movie and attending its gala premiere. Jacob Sherry, ’11, (telecommunications, IMP filmmaking from a directorial perspective) accomplished this goal before he graduated from college. Sherry’s film, Nathan and the Luthier, premiered at the IU Cinema his senior year, making it the first student-produced film shown at the state-of-the-art facility. He wrote and directed the 52-minute film, but he says it was a team effort, involving more than 50 people — half of whom were IU students — as well as generous local support and three HHC Creative Activity Grants. A Wells Scholar from New Orleans, Sherry created a major in filmmaking through IU’s Individualized Major Program. His passion led him to New Zealand, where he interned with South Pacific Pictures and co-directed a documentary about a total solar eclipse. He spent his senior year crafting Nathan.

“Film allows us to experience other places or people, or to live life through someone’s eyes for a time,” Sherry says.

His film focuses on Nathan, a 35-year-old coming to terms with a difficult childhood and his father’s death. Sherry used adult actors for the film, which is remarkable for both its mature theme and its Hollywood-like polish. He wants to enter Nathan in festivals, maybe even find a distributor. And he hopes the film will nurture IU’s burgeoning film culture.

“If I get one person excited about filmmaking at IU,” he says, “I will have accomplished something.”

In April, Sherry’s film packed the house at the IU Cinema.

— Keith Roach
Five join HHC’s alumni board

Danise Alano-Martin
BA’92 (journalism, environmental studies)
In 2005, after an 11-year community banking stint culminating in a position as vice president and marketing director of the former Monroe Bank in Bloomington, Danise Alano-Martin joined the City of Bloomington where she now serves as the director of economic and sustainable development. She is past president and a current board member of Downtown Bloomington Inc., as well as a new board member of the Humane-trix Foundation Inc., which provides superstructure to new technology-focused public events such as The Combine creativity conference, TEDx Bloomington, and Ignite Bloomington. She is particularly looking forward to forging lasting connections between the Bloomington community and entrepreneurs among the Hutton Honors College alumni.

Gordon Hendry
BA’92 (economics and political science)
Gordon Hendry is a member of CB Richard Ellis’s Public Institutions and Education Solutions Group in Indianapolis, where he provides real estate advisory services to state and local governments, universities, and colleges. He also has an economic-development incentives procurement practice. “As a native of Bloomington, I’m excited about the opportunity to serve Indiana University and contribute to the continued success of the Honors College, which was an important part of my IU experience. My first year I took several Honors College courses, including ones with Professors James Ackerman and Arlington Williams. Additionally, my father, Professor Archibald Hendry, taught an Honors College course for several years in physics.”

Virginia Harper Ho
BA’95 (Russian language and literature; Chinese language and literature); MA’97 (applied linguistics)
Virginia Harper Ho is an associate professor at the University of Kansas School of Law, teaching corporate and Chinese law. She taught at the Law School at IU from 2008 to 2010 and is excited to be part of the Hutton Honors College alumni board’s work. She looks forward to helping current IU honors students tap into connections with HHC alumni as they prepare for professional and postgraduate work.

Justin Krachmalnick
BS’11 (accounting and finance)
Justin Krachmalnick is a staff accountant at Massie, Fudemberg, Goldberg LLC in St. Louis. “As a recent graduate, I want to improve the Hutton Honors College network between students and alumni as well as the overall HHC community. Also, I hope to continue developing unique opportunities for HHC students to enhance their college and professional careers.”

Julie Wolinsky
BA’91 (political science, Spanish)
Julie Wolinsky lives in Arlington, Va., and is the founder of Packtoozi, a consumer product company whose mission is to simplify life on the go. She spent her junior year at IU studying in Madrid, Spain, and hopes to support the Hutton International Experiences Program. She is also interested in helping the Hutton Honors College expand its alumni outreach efforts and recently organized an HHC alumni event in Washington, D.C., with Dean Matt Auer on June 16.

To see the other members of the HHC alumni board, check our February 2011 newsletter at www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/alumni/Feb11.pdf.
Indiana University and HHC junior Kip Hutchins, 19, has been awarded a 2011 Beinecke Scholarship that he can apply to the graduate school of his choice. Hutchins plans to use the award to further his Mongolian studies following his projected May 2012 graduation.

A Hutton Honors College scholar double majoring in linguistics and folklore and ethnomusicology in the IU College of Arts and Sciences, Hutchins is one of 20 students nationwide to receive a Beinecke Scholarship and the seventh IU student to win the award, which was established in 1971. IU students have earned the Beinecke Scholarship in four of the last five years.

Each Beinecke Scholar receives $4,000 immediately prior to entering graduate school and an additional $30,000 while attending graduate school. There are no geographic restrictions on the use of the scholarship, and recipients are allowed to supplement the award with other scholarships, assistantships, and research grants.

“We are thrilled for Kip,” said Hutton Honors College Dean Matt Auer. “He is gifted at learning and mastering both familiar and less commonly taught languages, and he chose wisely by attending IU for his language training. We wish Kip much luck, and we are grateful to the Sperry Fund, which administers the Beinecke Scholarship program, for recognizing Kip’s amazing talent.”

At just 16, Hutchins began college at Appalachian State University near his western North Carolina home, transferring to IU a year later to pursue his interests in folklore and linguistics.

“Being a student at IU has sort of enabled everything,” Hutchins said. “It has allowed me to study languages from all over the world that I would never, ever have access to otherwise. It has allowed me to pursue folklore and linguistics as academic fields — the university where I started didn’t have departments in either area.”

This summer, he will travel to Mongolia to research communication — in particular, music used to communicate — between the members of a settled Mongolian community within a dominant historical culture of nomadism.

Hutchins said his father taught in Ghana before he was born and raised him with an idea of what West Africa was like. After attending a high school that offered only Spanish and French language classes (and when the French teacher left for another job, just Spanish), he was amazed by the many languages taught at IU.

“Before I came to IU, I had never heard Mongolian spoken before,” he said. “It was definitely the most striking to me, and I grew into liking it as a language. In a lot of ways, Mongolian culture is very similar to Appalachian culture, which is what I was used to.”

Part of that Appalachian culture included lots of storytelling. Growing up, Hutchins heard Bible stories from his mom, myths of various cultures from his dad, and Appalachian folk tales from storytellers at the local folklore center when he was in elementary school.

Part of Appalachian culture included lots of storytelling. Growing up, Hutchins heard Bible stories from his mom, myths of various cultures from his dad, and Appalachian folk tales from storytellers at the local folklore center when he was in elementary school.

“Stories were the way my family communicated,” he said. “We told folk tales or slightly dramatized versions of what happened during the day at dinner. Even now, if I was talking to a friend from North Carolina, I would probably use more sayings and proverbs. Rather than saying something directly, I would use a story to illustrate a point.”

One of his favorite Appalachia-isms: “If you want to drink with the devil, make sure to have a long spoon” (meaning “keep that person at arm’s length or they will do you harm”). He also likes an expression in Bambara, which translates to, “If you fall on a log, it will hurt you; if a log falls on you, it will hurt you.”

“I thought that one was funny. It means the same thing — a log is a log. No matter how you deal with it, you will get hurt.”

Overall, being able to study in IU’s departments of folklore and linguistics, as well as African and Mongolian studies, has helped Hutchins to fine-tune his research. “The faculty in these programs is really great. IU has pretty much allowed me to do everything I’ve wanted to do.”

For more information about the Beinecke Scholarship, see www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/hds/b.php.
Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh, are very proud of “young Isak.”

A.B. Assensoh impressed upon his mentee the importance of having work published.

“He took that advice so seriously that, even as an undergraduate student at Indiana University, Isak already has published no less than two review essays in refereed journals (produced by IU Press and Brill Academic Press of Europe),” Assensoh said. “(Dean Assensoh) and I expect young Isak Osagyefo Nti Asare to excel and blossom intellectually-cum-academically anywhere that he ends up for graduate or professional studies.”

Within the span of this past academic year, Nti Asare acted as treasurer of the African Languages Club (he was previously the president) and was undergraduate outreach coordinator for the African Studies Program. He received the Elvis J. Stahr Distinguished Senior Award; the Outstanding Senior Award and Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement Award (both from the Department of Linguistics); and the Wendell L. Willkie Scholarship for graduating seniors in political science.

He was also named McNair Scholar of the Year, is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and received departmental honors from the political science and linguistics departments for his two distinct thesis projects (one for each major). He is working on A Dictionary of the Susu Language of Guinea along with recently named Beinneke Scholar Kip Hutchins and Professor Samuel G. Obeng, director of the African Studies Program.

“He’s really a terrific student, leader, and person who will undoubtedly go on to do many significant things beyond IU,” said Assistant Professor of Political Science Lauren MacLean. “Isak is not only intellectually engaged and academically serious, but he also always has a big smile for everyone he meets.”

When people talk about Nti Asare, they usually mention his characteristic humility. True to form, the accomplished student said he only agreed to be interviewed to honor his faculty and fellow student mentors. "I think a seed is only as good as the soil in which it’s planted, and I guess a seed is only as good as the tree from which it came, right? Even the best of seeds and the best of soil need a really good gardener," he said. Nti Asare said that he can look back and clearly see his growth since freshman year. Two overseas trips — one to Ghana the summer after his freshman year at IU, and one to Tanzania last summer — were incredible learning experiences. In Tanzania, he worked for a brief time with an NGO that helped AIDS victims. “They were talking a lot about research and studies, which was impactful to me, because it showed that academic research and the things we’re doing at universities make a big difference in the world,” he said. “Our studies, our travel, our work, can have an impact. I think that’s what ultimately motivated me to want to do a career in international development and international affairs.” Richard S. Melvin Professor of Law Kevin Brown said he expects that one day, Nti Asare’s natural leadership abilities and his talent for inspiring confidence in others will make him a significant player in the international scene. “Isak is more prepared than any student I have ever known to pursue academic interests in issues pertaining to indigenous politics, globalization, processes of democratization, poverty alleviation, and the international political economy,” Brown said. “He has lived in eight different countries on four different continents. When you talk to Isak, you know that you have met someone who is truly special and destined for future greatness.

“Frankly, in my 24 years as a professor, I have never met a student that I am more confident will play a huge part on the world’s stage in tackling the world’s most significant problems than Isak,” he added. Next up for Nti Asare: His June wedding to Maria Moore, whom he’s known since his sophomore year of high school in Wyoming, and then deciding where to attend graduate school. IU will always hold a special place in his heart. “IU is an awesome place,” he said. “It is the soil that brings the gardeners — professors — and the seeds — students — together. When the seed grows, he can only look back and be thankful to the environment which attributed to his growth.”

Free Bridge Membership for unemployed alumni

The IU Alumni Association’s Bridge Membership program provides unemployed IU alumni free access to online career services.

For details call (800) 824-3044 and ask for the Membership Department.