

## SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

The Ghana Association of Greater Boston was formally founded on March 23, 1991 as a non-profit social and cultural organization of all Ghanaians in the Greater Boston Area. Prior to the formal inauguration of 1991, the Association had existed in several different forms although the aims and purposes remained the same.

As a non-political mutual aid organization, the objectives of the association include but are not limited to:

- Bringing together and promoting cordial relations between all Ghanaians in the Greater Boston Region and between Ghanaians and other groups;
- Promoting and sustaining our cultural interests and general welfare by representing the Ghanaian Community in relations with public officials in the US and Ghana.
- Providing moral and material support to members in times of joy and sadness, and when appropriate, extending assistance to local projects/programs in Ghana.
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Members in “good standing” derive many benefits. A member in good standing is one who has paid up his/her annual dues, attends a number of monthly meetings of the Association, and/or participates in events and activities hosted or sponsored by the Association.

Benefits accrue to members and their families, and are both material and non-material, as outlined below. Most importantly, as Ghanaians, we want not only to share in the joys and sorrows of members, but we also want to enhance access to social and economic benefits, and other opportunities for members.

### Birth/Outdooring/Naming Ceremony/Engagement/ Marriage:

A member-in-good-standing can request/obtain the Association’s assistance in mailing his/her invitations. If requested, the Association would also issue an e-mail, encouraging members to attend the event. On such happy occasions, the Association sends a congratulatory card or message to the member. In addition to the Executives and Members physically attending such happy occasions and making donations to the family, the Association also makes a token donation to the family, as mandated by the Constitution.

Bereavement/Illness/Hospitalization: The Association strives to console members in times of misfortune, such as death in the family, illness and/or hospitalization. Because there is comfort in numbers, the Association seeks to express solidarity by attending gatherings including funerals, hospital visits, religious gatherings and other events for such solemn situations. The Executives and Members of GAGB in their full force team up to console the affected member and his/her family. In the case of a death, a sympathy card is sent out.

If the loss impacts a member in good-standing directly (i.e. a member's close or immediate relatives such as parents, children and spouse as defined in the Constitution), the Association makes a token cash donation as mandated by the constitution. The Association also uses its network of members and other forms of publicity to mobilize members and other sympathizers to make financial and other contributions to defray some of the costs incurred by the bereaved family.

If the Association is informed that a member is ill or hospitalized, an e-mail goes out to inform members, and a “get-well” card is sent to the member’s home or to the hospital/hospice. If permitted, the Executives and members of the

Association may visit the member who is ill.

Other Benefits not mandated by the Constitution of GAGB. These include but are not limited to:

- Attending members', or their immediate family members' graduation ceremonies, first communion, confirmation and other coming of age events. If a member informs the Association of a pending event, a bulletin goes out, encouraging members to attend.
- Indirect access to data base/addresses of Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian individuals or organizations for publicizing events, business contacts and networking.
- Education: The Association has established links with Schools that members may use to enhance especially their children's education.
- GAGB assists members who are new to Boston and not familiar with the various institutions, to find accommodation, buy homes and establish businesses.
- GAGB assists members in need of legal advice, Ghanaian

passport/visa and other travel documents. The Association has a solid reputation which allows it to intervene effectively on behalf of members who need help with Ghanaian diplomats in the Ghana Embassy in Washington, DC and the Consulate in New York.

- GAGB has a network of professionals to assist with travel arrangements/shipping to Ghana, IRS tax preparation/filing, career development and job search.
- GAGB could assist members to get appropriate medical attention and services in case of complex medical problems that require strong patient advocacy.
- GAGB also offers unique opportunities to members to participate in special presentations, including first-time home buyer programs, insurance, job training, and computer skills for children especially.
- GAGB helps to promote/advertise Ghanaian businesses.

**Please Note:** GAGB's role in the nine bulleted services above is limited to providing information only. GAGB will

help open doors for members to access the above listed services. GAGB respects people's privacy. Protecting the individual's privacy and confidentiality is paramount to GAGB, and the Association will not violate members' privacy.

Regular Paid-up Members are Ghanaians 18 years and over who pay their annual dues and attend meetings and events of the association.

Associate Members are all Ghanaian children 17 years or younger.

Honorary membership is conferred on non-Ghanaians who demonstrate their interest in the welfare of Ghanaians.

**GAGB MEMBERSHIP FEE:**

Adult: \$50.00

Young Adult: \$25.00