

KWABENA YIADOM

2004–05 AAAS Fellow at the U.S. Department of Defense

Born in the West African nation of Ghana, Kwabena Yiadom came to the United States after high school to pursue his education, eventually becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen. However, he did not have to travel far to start his fellowship — he completed his PhD in chemistry, as well as a postdoctoral fellowship, at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

Although his postdoctoral research was geared to the defense arena (developing detection systems and treatments for botulism), he was not interested in pursuing a public policy career until he saw an advertisement for the fellowships in *Science*. He decided to apply to become a AAAS Fellow so that he could use his scientific skills to benefit a broader audience and learn how public policy is shaped.

Kwabena accepted an assignment in the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) International Technology Programs Office. “There was a steep learning curve,” Kwabena recalls, “I was used to working independently in a lab, and as a Fellow, I was sitting in a lot of meetings and doing a lot of coordination between colleagues and offices.” He represented his agency and office at a variety of high-level sessions on a wide range of topics, including federal agency outreach to research universities, U.S.-Turkey Defense Industrial Cooperation, and technical collaboration between the U.S. and Hungary. He also authored a white paper addressing the need for improved international science and technology collaboration between the DoD and other agencies engaged in defense-related basic research, such as the National Science Foundation. In addition, Kwabena collaborated with other AAAS Fellows at DoD and the U.S. Department of State, as well as a variety of private, public and government agency partners, to launch the Iraqi Virtual Science Library (see page 20).

Early in Kwabena’s fellowship year, he made a connection with DoD’s Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation (PA&E). Upon completion of the year, he joined PA&E as an operations research analyst in Strategic and Space Programs. “The fellowship boosted my career,” he says. “It gave me the perfect avenue to new alternatives, and it ended up taking me in a different path.”

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