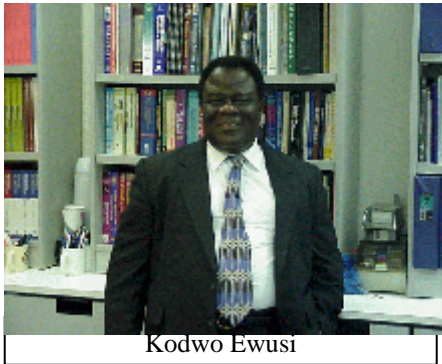


FOCUS ON . . .
. . .KODWO EWUSI

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I was escorting a new adjunct colleague around one day several years ago, showing him where the copy room was and where he could bring material he needed to have typed. My new colleague, with whom I was already acquainted from other academic circles, was from Ghana. As we walked down the hallway, a familiar face suddenly appeared and approached us with a great deal of excitement. “I heard there was someone here who is from Ghana,” he exclaimed, “and I wanted to meet him!” He proceeded to vigorously shake the newcomer’s hand and extend a warm welcome to him. After a few minutes of exchanging pleasantries, the familiar face disappeared as quickly as it had appeared.



Lawrence, my new colleague, turned to me with an ashen face. “Do you know who that was?” he asked in disbelief. I replied that I did, although gauging from his reaction, I was a little less sure. “He is a very important man in our country,” Lawrence continued. “He has written many textbooks; his economics text is used by virtually every Ghanaian college student who studies economics!”

This is how I learned about the considerable stature that the familiar face—which belonged to our colleague Kodwo Ewusi—commanded in a land far away from Delaware Tech. I was already quite aware of his stature at our college: hard-working, friendly and thoughtful, always quick to smile and say something nice to those he encountered. I was also aware of what appeared to be his natural ability to lead others, whether in the Math department or the Faculty Senate. But to learn such impressive things about his reputation in his native land...*that* was something else altogether! It speaks volumes about his humility that, given his stature, he nonetheless went out of his way to track down a fellow countryman and make him feel welcome.

I have since learned a good deal more about this interesting colleague with the mystery vita. Educated at Columbia University, where he received his bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in economics, Kodwo returned to his native Ghana, where he taught economics and statistics for twenty years. Teaching, however, was not his primary avocation at that time: instead, it was serving as the director of the Institute for Statistical, Social, and Economic Research. Throughout this time, he also served as a consultant for such internationally important organizations as the United Nations and the World Bank. He also served on the Ghanaian equivalent of the U.S. Council of Economic Advisors. There were other distinctions as well: Kodwo authored or coauthored ten textbooks, one of which—the economics text mentioned earlier—received a prestigious award. Along the way, he was also inducted as a fellow into the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, the elite academic institution in that country.

Kodwo’s interest in teaching grew out of his research activities while directing the Institute for Statistical, Social, and Economic Research. He rose quickly from assistant professor to full professor. So, by the time he emigrated to the United States nine years ago, he had long since become a devoted educator.

Kodwo spent his first two years teaching at Delaware State University. Then, in 1993, he got an opportunity to come to Delaware Tech. Actually, a former student of his alerted him to the opening for an instructor of mathematics. The rest, as they say, is history.

Kodwo says that he really appreciates the students that come to our college because they are more motivated to learn than students with whom he has worked elsewhere. He places a great deal of importance on his ability to have an impact on students’ learning. One thing that has been a real

challenge for him, he states, is enduring the time it takes classes to adjust to his accent and “warm up” to him. But it is hard to imagine that, with his warm personality, that could take very long.

Like many of us, Kodwo is busy learning how to make changes in his presentation techniques, including the incorporation of multimedia technologies. At the same time, he values the use of “soft” techniques that focus more on how students interact with each other in the classroom. He is particularly interested in sharing experiences with colleagues about the use of collaborative teaching and learning techniques. One thing is certain: Kodwo Ewusi is a teacher who loves to learn.