

THE DAVID ADOMAKO-ANSAH LEADERSHIP AWARD



In Memory of
David Anthony Kwateng
Adomako-Ansah
June 14, 1989 - June 10, 2013

*“He was very much a believer of do everything to
the best of your ability and not regretting it.”*
–Sarah Adomako-Ansah on her brother

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: JUNE 10, 2017

The David Adomako-Ansah Leadership Award is offered by the Archbishop MacDonald High School Students' Union.

As a leader both in and outside of the MAC Community, this scholarship endeavors to commemorate who David was as a generous, passionate, philanthropic, and loving individual, and will ensure that his legacy will never be forgotten. To learn more about David, please see the end of this scholarship application for his story entitled "A Glimpse Into My Past."

This scholarship is designed to recognize and promote excellence in volunteer service and leadership by a Grade 12 Archbishop MacDonald Student who demonstrates commitment to Archbishop MacDonald High School and at the community level while promoting advocacy on behalf of others. This scholarship will reward a student who demonstrates the same level of generosity, passion, philanthropy, and love for others that David did.

Value: scholarships will be awarded **up to \$1000.00** (see disclaimers below).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Is currently a Grade 12 student enrolled at Archbishop MacDonald High School.
2. Community service at the school and community level.
3. Has provided proof of acceptance at an accredited post-secondary institution prior to the application deadline. Official early acceptance/conditional admission documents from the institution's registrar's office will suffice. If these documents are unavailable prior to the application deadline, please contact Mme. Dallaire. Please note that all documents submitted must bear the registrar's official seal/signature.

HOW TO APPLY:

Application instructions and forms are attached below..

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Mme. Dallaire must receive the application form and all supporting materials by **June 10, 2017**. The successful candidate will receive the award at Archbishop MacDonald's Fall Awards Night Ceremony, and will be notified prior.

AWARDS COMMITTEE:

The Awards Committee consists of Students' Union Teacher Advisors (Mme. Dallaire and Mrs. Sarnecki), Ms. Sarah Adomako-Ansah (MAC Alumnus and David's sister), and Mr. Mohit Kumar (MAC Alumnus, VP External 2006-2008, and David's friend). The recipient of this year's award may be asked to serve on next year's Awards Committee.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Complete the attached scholarship application form.
2. Complete and attach a personal statement about the experiences you have had while volunteering and/or serving as a leader in your community (outside of MAC). You may draw from your experiences and service in community organizations, sports, cultural, musical, political activities, etc. Some things to consider before you prepare your personal statement: What skills have you gained from your community service work? What have you learned about philanthropy, teamwork, compassion, leadership, and advocating on behalf of others? What experiences or projects seemed the most interesting or important to you and why? Has volunteering influenced your goals or future career plans? How? **Please be sure to address why you deserve this scholarship.** Note: please use Times New Roman font, size 12, single-spaced, with 1 inch margins. **Personal statements exceeding one page will not be considered.**
3. Letter of Reference:
 - a. One letter of reference is required from your leadership at Archbishop MacDonald High School.
 - b. One letter of reference is required from your leadership at the community level.
 - c. Provide your referee with the attached “Instructions for Referees” page, and ask them to return their reference letter to you labeled with your name and the referee’s name.
4. Proof of conditional acceptance or application at an accredited post-secondary institution is required prior to the application deadline. Print off conditional acceptance from the school’s portal site is sufficient. If these documents are unavailable prior to the application deadline, please contact Mme. Dallaire.
5. Assemble your completed application, sign, and date it. Submit your application by email to Mme. Dallaire at: Cindy.Dallaire@ecsd.net by the application deadline of **June 10, 2017. Only emailed applications will be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

DISCLAIMERS:

1. Applications and supporting materials are confidential and become the property of the Awards Committee and will not be returned. You should retain a copy for your own records.
2. Decisions of the Awards Committee are final.
3. The value of the Scholarship will be awarded **up to \$1000.00.**
4. All awarded funds are dependent on Archbishop MacDonald Student Union fundraising initiative.

APPLICATION:

Personal and Academic Information:

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
Home/Mailing Address	City	Postal Code
Telephone (home)	E-Mail	Grade

Name of post-secondary institution (e.g. university, college, technical, or trade school) where you have applied for admission.

In point form, please list **all** of the activities (separated by month and year) you have been involved at Archbishop MacDonald High School. Include your duties/responsibilities and an approximate number of hours devoted to each activity. Use only the space provided and **do not** include extra pages.

Community Service (Volunteer/Leadership Experience) / Extracurricular Activities:

In point form, please tell us about any of these activities in which you may be involved (community, sports, music, political, religious and/or cultural, etc.). Include your duties/responsibilities and an approximate number of hours devoted to each activity thus far. Also list any awards or distinctions you have received. Separate activities/awards by month and year. Please provide the full name and phone number of a person who can verify each activity/award. You may **not** use yourself or a friend/family member as a verifier. Use only the space provided and **do not** include extra pages.

Attach to the application the following:

- 1) Personal Statement
- 2) Two Reference Letters
- 3) Proof of acceptance at an accredited post-secondary institution

Applicant Signature:

I certify that the information contained in this application is complete, correct, and has not been falsified. I understand and agree to all disclaimers mentioned above. I acknowledge and understand that in order to be considered for The David Adomako-Ansah Leadership Award, my application and all supporting documents will undergo review by the members of the above-mentioned Awards Committee. I understand and agree that Archbishop MacDonald High School may use my name and award information in various publications, presentations, and announcements to promote the school and/or this award.

Personal information in this application is collected under the authority of *Section 33(c) of Alberta's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for authorized purposes including awards and scholarships.

Signature

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian (required if applicant is 17 years of age or younger):

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Address and Telephone (if different than applicant's)

Signature

Date

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this application, please direct them to either Mme. Dallaire Cindy.Dallaire@ecsd.net or Mr. Mohit Kumar (mkumar1@ualberta.ca).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REFEREES:

The David Adomako-Ansah Leadership Award (up to \$1000.00) is offered by the Archbishop MacDonald High School Students' Union.

You have been asked to provide a letter of reference for a student applying for The David Adomako-Ansah Leadership Award. Your letter forms an important part of the candidate's application, and the Awards Committee relies on this letter in selecting a recipient.

Applicants are expected to be developing the ability to interact and communicate well with people and must have demonstrated an exceptional level of volunteer work, leadership, as well as overall commitment to their community and advocacy on behalf of others through involvement and service in community organizations, sports, cultural, musical, political activities, etc. This scholarship will reward a student who demonstrates the same level of generosity, passion, philanthropy, and love for others that David Adomako-Ansah did.

Please be honest in describing **why the applicant is worthy of this award.**

Your letter of reference is confidential, therefore, **please return your letter to the applicant labeled with your name and the applicant's name.**

Applicants have until **June 10, 2017** to apply, so please return your reference letter to the applicant before this date.

Your reference letter should be typed, signed, and dated. The following information should appear at the top of your letter:

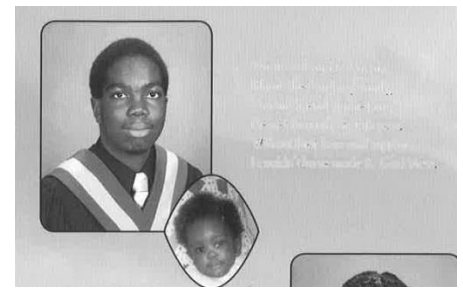
1. Name of applicant
2. Your full name
3. Your telephone number
4. Your occupation/position
5. Your place of work
6. Your relationship to the applicant (i.e. how you know him/her)
7. Length of time you have known the applicant

Thank You.

Sincerely,

The Awards Committee

A Glimpse Into My Past by David Adomako-Ansah



Published on February 29, 2012 on the Western Canadian Children's Heart Network Website

From the start of 2006, all the way up until the middle of 2009, I have been faced with situations unbearable. I've come to realize that too many times in life; people are faced with hardships and tough decisions to make. The road to success is never smooth, especially with all the obstacles we must encounter to succeed. I faced my first obstacle in April of 2006. I woke up one day just feeling more tired than usual. I had some rashes on my face and I didn't have enough energy to walk up the stairs. My parents took me to the U of A hospital, and after tons and tons of tests, I was diagnosed with Lupus. I went home that day and kept asking God, "Why Me?" like I was to remain invincible for the rest of my life. It wasn't as bad as I first thought. I had to take a whole bunch of meds at certain times, and get blood work every week. My sisters had to deal with my mood swings, like I had menopause or something, so I thank them for that.

In November, just when I was getting comfortable, I faced my second obstacle. It was the 7th, and I had a physics test the next day, which was an obstacle in itself. My dad had dropped me off at around 6 so I could get some tutoring. When I went to sit down, I started feeling funny, suddenly, I couldn't talk. I literally couldn't speak. Things were getting fuzzy; I started falling out of my chair, etc. An ambulance came for me, and sent me to the University Hospital. The nurses there were asking me numerous questions, trying to get me to start speaking outta, but there was nothing coming out of me, nothing was happening. I was given a paper and pen, and I couldn't write either. My parents arrived and I started crying. I had no idea what was going on. I fell asleep for a couple hours, and when I woke up, it was like nothing had happened. I just had that same tired feeling I had in April. I spent two weeks on the Adult ward, and they had told me that I had had three blots shoot up to the left side of my brain, and that I had had some strokes in that time. I came to the conclusion that physics kills you.

That Christmas, I spent time praying, and being thankful that I was still alive and still moving, despite the events of the past year. I was thankful that I was able to get through a tough year. I prayed for a different outcome for the next year, and I definitely got it. After I got owned in my physics midterm, there were times in the day where I could feel my heart beating too fast, or sometimes not at all. Once again, it was tough for me to move up a flight of stairs. I had to take the elevator to get to my classes. No elevator, no wheelchair, just me and my backpack, and a chick or two. On the 16th, my dad came to the school to pick me up, because yet again, my lupus started acting up and I had to spend another two weeks up on the 5th floor, and a lot of my elderly homies from last time were still there.

Like I did at Christmas, I spent time reflecting on what exactly helped get me to where I was. I had support from my family, coming in every night. I had support from my friends, coming in after school, filling me in on what was going on. I had the teachers coming as well. None of them brought any assignments, so that was a bonus. All I needed now was the medical staff. My mistake there was thinking that they had all the answers to my illness, forgetting that they were human as well. Some of them had no idea what was going on with me. One day I'm good, next

day I'm not. Maybe it was just a setback, those happen right? On March 3rd I went home feeling a bit safe. Things happen and I just had to try my best to stay healthy and active.

My body wasn't agreeing with my thoughts. I spent five days living on my couch. I was drained. No energy to walk, to sleep, to eat, even to breathe. My family were weighting on me hand and foot. When we called the doctors, we were told that there was a bug going around, and I should take some Tylenol. By day five, I had had enough and we headed down to emergency. If it weren't for the constant assistance from my twin sister Sarah, and little sister Samantha, I don't know if I would have made it on that last day. It was around 12:30, and once again I couldn't breathe. My sisters noticed it, and packed a bag for me filled with stuff I would need for the hospital. We waited in emergency for a good 6 and half hours, until I was attended to. They say in that time, I was again withering away. It took a few days for them to decide that I was going to need a defibrillator/pacemaker implanted. I don't remember much about getting implanted, the most I remember is the pain that I went through afterwards. The pacemaker they had given me wasn't working, and I had to go into surgery. It was a Sunday, and I met this German doctor named Holger. I couldn't remember his name, so I always sang the Foldger's jingle, since they rhymed.

The next month is pretty much a blur to me. I was told that I was given my Berlin Heart on April 16th. The closet thing I remember is that day they held a mirror up to my face so I could see how I looked, and I had lost about 20 pounds. The next six weeks led to a lot of complications. I guess the Lupus had hit my lungs, because I had to get a track implanted in my neck so that I was able to breathe. My lungs had collapsed; I was put on tube feeds, because I wasn't able to eat. Every time there was a complication, they had to stop my tube feeds and that just added to the depleting. In a couple of weeks, I had dropped all the way to about 32 kilograms. There was a couple times where my lungs were bleeding, like on May 30th, when I almost passed away. Lucky for me, my doctor was always there when I needed him, coming in at 3 in the morning to deal with my complications. I had lost the ability to do things as snap my finger, walk, talk, sing, write, and smile. Things started getting better after the previous Berlin Heart patient came to visit me and tell me about her experience. It was nice having her come. It was nice knowing that there was someone that actually knew what I was going through. Everyone could feel as sorry as they wanted, but they just didn't know. Another turning point was when I had my family and closest friends hold a small graduation for me in my room. It was the first time any of them had seen me since March. Some of them even came in suits, it was amazing. My eighteenth birthday, the whole graduating class attended. It was special. I realized that, there are all these people fighting for me, so I have to fight just as hard.

Obviously during this time, I had many thoughts of just, giving up. I didn't think I would ever get back to the same, loud, crazy, sweet, passionate, loving, caring, affectionate guy you all knew and loved. I thought that I was too far down to be able to get back up. I think the only thing that kept me going was the fact knowing, that I wasn't alone. Every day, my sisters would come in and tell me that these people are praying for me, and those people said hi, and that they're thinking about me, and that all these people know that I'm gunna get through this. My sisters would come in and read me a "get well" note that a friend had written for me during a class...spare. Every day I was told by the nurses, doctors, friends and everybody else telling me, "Oh David, you're so strong; I don't know how you could get through this. I know that I



couldn't". I didn't believe that for a second. If you were to ask me if I could handle a situation like this before I was diagnosed with Lupus, I would've told you the exact same answer I was getting; NO. I believe that it's not until you're faced with such a challenge that you eventually say to yourself, I'm gunna fight this, and then you just find a way to do just that.

On December 21st of 2007 I was discharged! That day I became the first person outside of Europe to go home on a Berlin Heart. It wasn't a tough transition back home, but more of a weird adjustment. I had to learn how to take my meds independently because there were no more nurses around. I got to sleep in now that there was no doctor opening my blinds in the morning. That being said, I had to learn to wake up on time to take my meds. I also had to learn to take it easy. I was never one to just sit around and do nothing, so the past few years have been difficult. On my time on the Berlin, I kept busy by doing some public speaking on the U of A campus, schools in the city, charitable organizations and in the U of A Hospital. My big project that I decided to tackle was my own non-profit organization I started in 2008 called the Dunk On Disease Foundation, geared to raising money for the Stollery. There were quite a few challenges on the Berlin. I had gotten used to the constant clicking, if you didn't, you'd go crazy. It was more when my pump would beep and set off an alarm. When my blood pressure would rise, or if there was a kink in the tube, there would be a loud, annoying beep. It always seemed to beep at the wrong times, like when I would run to catch a bus, or when an attractive young lady looked my way. The driver itself weighed over 20 pounds, so it was tough lugging it around up and down flights of stairs. Physiotherapy kept me both healthy and entertained. I don't believe there was ever a day when I didn't have a huge posse attending. Being in the public eye wasn't always thrilling either. One evening, I went to see a movie with my sister and some friends. There was a lady sitting in front of me, which was fine. There was a scene where things sort of got quiet, making my clicking more audible. This lady whipped around and said very rudely, "Can you STOP that?!" I was taken aback because that was the first time someone had told me to hush while on my Berlin. I just smiled calmly and said, "Actually ma'am, this is my mechanical heart. If I do 'stop it', things could get messy." She then looked at my Berlin and must've recognized me from somewhere and her eyes just ballooned. She quickly turned around and at the end of the movie she bolted out of the theatre.

The only real problem was my lupus. It seemed nothing was working really, until my then lupus doctor, Dr. Ellsworth suggested a drug called cyclophosphamide that would be given through an IV. It's commonly used for chemotherapy and for lupus patients. I came in once a month for a 24-hour treatment. After the first two months I started noticing a difference. I wasn't having as many lupus flare ups. We did this for a year, originally hoping to wean me off the Berlin without having a transplant. By this point, my heart was too far gone for saving. But my lupus was under control, eliminating the chance of it attacking any other organs. On December 27th, I received a call from Celine the transplant co-coordinator. I was relisted for a heart transplant! I immediately grabbed a duffle bag and packed clothing to last for about four days. I didn't want to be rushing when I actually got the call. During my wait, I tried not to think about getting the call, but that was impossible. One thing I found very therapeutic during the last three years was writing. I was a contributor to my high school newspaper, and really enjoyed it. I was able to pour whatever I wanted on a page without being judged.



I did that all the way up until February 22nd, 2009 when I was woken up by my dad at six in the morning yelling, “David...the hospital called...they have a heart for ready...” I immediately shot up out of my bed, more awake than I’ve ever been. Those who know me know how much I love my sleep, so having me actually get up to get the operation deserves a pat on the back. I had a 2009 calendar filled with quotes from the TV show The Office. I looked at the date and the first line on the quote-of-the-day read, “I can’t do this...” I sat there and thought about what has happened to me and everyone around me in the last few years and said, “Yes...I can.” When you get a call as important as this, there are too many emotions running through your mind to pinpoint just one. “What if this is just a dry run? This was the first call, but then again...it could be the actual thing...I’m relieved to be starting a new chapter...but it could end...” I met my mom, and she came in the room crying. We sat and prayed and prayed and prayed. I was the one reassuring her things were going to be alright. It was just my mom and my dad that knew, because the girls and my brother were sleeping, so I sent my sisters a text message....yes, a text message.

When I came in, I was admitted on the 4th floor. Holger came in and said, “My one vacation day in the year, and you have to have a transplant.” So I shot back with, “Oh, I’m sorry that my life inconveniences you Holgy.” The next thing I knew, I was on a stretcher wearing one of those stylish surgical caps, awaiting my next big life altering experience. The surgery was successful! There were a couple of things like hallucinations...but we won’t get into those. Since the transplant, my outlook on life has changed even from when I was on the Berlin. It really is like night-and-day. I’m free to do all the things I used to and more. I’m free to be David again. I will forever be grateful to God, my Mom & Dad, my siblings, the Donor family, my friends, all of my nurses, doctors & medical staff, the Child Life Program, the Edmonton Eskimos & Edmonton Oil Kings for visiting me personally whenever I was admitted and all the total strangers who would come up and tell me they were rooting for me. In a way, it’s like I’m always giving an acceptance speech because now I can finally accept and appreciate life for what it is.

The advice I give to the people I encounter nowadays is that before something like this ever happens to you or somebody you know, go out and give everything you do 100% effort. Don’t worry about what others say, just give everything you’re all, because you just never know. I think that in situations like mine, and with every successful journey, you need the support of the people close to you in order for you to start believing in yourself.

Thank you for your time. Take Care, Much Love & God Bless.

