

Experiencing Aina Blankson

As decades of practice experience and exposure to different shades of clientele needs have greatly enhanced our appreciation of "thinking" as the cornerstone of success, the "Thinkers and Leaders Internship Program" ("TLIP" or the "Internship") provides challenging opportunities for talented undergraduate and graduate students to gain practical insights into the operational environment of Aina Blankson. The Program is designed to provide an enriching experience characterized by measurable on-the-job training and an avenue to develop leadership traits in young individuals and assist them in realizing their potentials. Two of our recently engaged interns share their experiences at the Aina Blankson Thinkers & Leaders Internship Program.



The Thinkers News is a periodic publication of the "Aina Blankson Thinkers & Leaders Initiative" which Includes Internship, Fellowship and Executive Programs

MOTOLANI PETERS



As a 400-level Law student at Afe Babalola University, in July 2024, I had the privilege of interning at Aina Blankson, an experience that has been truly exceptional. I was initially drawn to the firm because of its commitment to advancing the legal field in Nigeria, exemplified by its significant role in establishing the Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse. This is a mission that aligns perfectly with my own career aspirations of effecting meaningful change within the Nigerian legal landscape. While my primary objectives for this internship were to gain practical experience and insight into the daily operations of a law firm, I ended up achieving far more than anticipated. When I first arrived at the firm, I felt like a deer in headlights, overwhelmed and unsure of what to expect. However, the friendly and welcoming atmosphere quickly eased my nerves as I was impressed by the firm's professionalism, efficiency, and dedication from the outset. The induction session was particularly enlightening, offering a comprehensive overview of the firm's history, culture, and expectations. This experience set a new goal for me: to meet their high standards and make a meaningful contribution.

Throughout my internship, I engaged in a diverse range of tasks, each offering new learning experiences. My days were a blend of engaging in a lively victimless crime debate which helped sharpen my critical thinking skills, writing articles which improved my legal writing skills, attending court sessions provided me with first-hand experience of both the good and bad sides of courtroom proceedings. While reviewing contracts enhanced my attention to detail and foisted on me the importance of conducting legal research, making presentations with my colleagues fostered teamwork and communicative skills.

Reflecting on my internship, I recognize how much I have grown both professionally and personally. The challenges I faced, one of which being managing a heavy workload during particularly busy periods coupled with the invaluable insights gained have deepened my passion for law and the need to adapt to demanding circumstances. This growth would not have been possible without the guidance of Omodamola Ajayi, a mentor who offered constructive feedback and shared her personal experiences with me. Her dedication, exceptional work ethic, and meticulous approach to tasks, along with her ability to manage multiple responsibilities with grace and efficiency, were truly inspiring. Her mentorship greatly enriched my experience and will undoubtedly influence my future career.

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In conclusion my internship at Aina Blankson exceeded all expectations. It provided me with practical professional skills and personal growth. I am deeply grateful to everyone at the firm for the opportunity and the support, guidance and encouragement. I especially appreciate how they involved me in discussions, valued my input, and provided constructive feedback, all of which significantly enhanced my learning experience. As I move forward in my career, I will carry with me the lessons learned and the friendships formed during this unforgettable internship at Aina Blankson.

NOFEÏLA CORNILLON



As a second-year student at the Catholic University of Lille in Issy-les-Moulineaux, France, I was given the opportunity to join Aina Blankson in Lagos, Nigeria, for a four-week internship. As a first timer in Nigeria and with little idea of what to expect or the specific tasks, my fears were not just allayed but truly melted by the serene environment and dedicated workforce. With the amazing supervision of Omodamola Ajayi, I was genuinely impressed by the firm's commitment to staff well-being which was not only repeatedly stated but demonstrated every inch of the way that "Staff is the number one client" at Aina Blankson. This sentiment is clearly reflected in the firm's culture, where the well-being of employees is a top priority.

With positive work environment that encourages open communication, constructive feedback and productive exchanges among staff, it is quite easy to experience key elements of what makes Aina Blankson a truly leading law firm. Having gained a comprehensive understanding of what it means to work at Aina Blankson, I have come to fully appreciate the importance of critical-thinking and sharing your ideas without the fear of being judged.

I had the opportunity to explore a judicial system distinct from the French one, which is the system I am accustomed to in my home country. What struck me most was the legal duality in Nigeria, where the North and South apply different criminal laws. Specifically, the Penal Code is used in the northern region, while the Criminal Code applies in the southern region. This division in the application of criminal justice was particularly intriguing and novel to me, as I had not previously encountered such a differentiated approach to criminal law. Quite apart from the opportunity afforded me in exchanging ideas with coworkers on projects and debates, I also spent quite some time in the library where I was drowning in books, trying to understand how the legal system works and how it was implemented in a country as rich and resourceful as Nigeria. With the freedom afforded me to choose a research topic, I focused on "Economic and Financial Crimes: Administering Criminal Justice." Crafting this article demanded open-mindedness and thorough research, both online and in books, as well as engaging discussions with colleagues which were invaluable in deepening my understanding of the current challenges in Nigeria relating to economic and financial crimes.

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As a whole, interning at Aina Blankson was a wonderful experience that I would recommend to anyone who wishes to come out of their comfort zone and explore beyond their knowledge and limits. As eagerness to learn has always been a defining trait of mine, the opportunity to apply this trait over the past four weeks has been a pivotal experience in my professional and personal development. It has been a pleasure to meet and collaborate with a diverse group of individuals. Witnessing their dedication and ambition has instilled in me a sense of optimism, reinforcing my belief that the world we are shaping holds promise for future generations.

My special thanks to the Aina Blankson team, most especially Omodamola Ajayi for being such a wonderful supervisor, giving me such a warm welcome and making me feel like I was a part of the Aina Blankson family.

THE
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THINKERS & LEADERS
INITIATIVE

"Promoting Imaginative Thinking; Enabling Excellence"

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Our Specialized Programs include the Thinkers & Leaders Internship, Fellowship and Executive Programs. AB-TLI is committed to our People centric philosophy, professional development and collective empowerment towards exceeding clients expectation and most of all preparing for relevance in the global world stage.

The AB-TLI is powered by ab-Academy, the learning and development power house of Aina Blankson.

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