

Faces of HMEA - March 2005

Jack Ambulie Dorley is the Assistant Manager at High Street. He was hired in a support position in March 2002, and promoted in August 2003. As the second eldest in a family of six brothers and four sisters, Jack quickly learned what was important, and how to be a leader. During the 10-year war in Liberia, Jack, then 16, and his brothers and sisters left their parents behind and traveled to neighboring Ghana to complete their schooling. Their parents stayed in Liberia to watch over their home and belongings, knowing that the true opportunity for advancing their children's education lay in Ghana, where there was no war. At 18, Jack left his brothers and sisters and returned to Liberia to attend the affordable Ame Zion Community College and pursue a degree in Accounting. "Getting a degree in business would assure me of a job quicker in Liberia or Ghana as opposed to human services." After completing the three year curriculum, Jack graduated with an Associates degree in accounting and landed his first job at Coca Cola in Liberia where he stayed for two more years. "There, I saw so much war. People who lost their arm or a leg, children without parents, and there was no one there to care for them. I knew I had to leave and get a good education and return one day to help my country." With the war still raging, Jack returned to Ghana to work as an assistant administrator at the Lutheran Clinic.

In April 2000, Jack's childhood dream came true as he seized an opportunity to come to the United States and start a life here, living with his aunt in Rhode Island. She had emigrated in 1990 and had always told him to come over if he could. For the first year and a half Jack stayed in the business world; while he was working at Texas Instruments, he was having a casual conversation with a friend. He mentioned his life in Liberia, and spoke of his desire to help other people. He really wanted to get into the field of human services. As good fortune would have it, that friend was the daughter of a manager at HMEA!



When asked what he likes about America he did not hesitate." It is a country of equalization! What you work for, you get. In Liberia, if I work 40 hours and look to get paid at the end of the week, there may or may not be the money for me. Here in America, if I work 40 hours, I get paid for 40 hours." He also particularly enjoys the freedom that is allowed in the USA, the freedom to move about freely without being intimidated, and the freedom of choice.

However, he's not too keen on the abundance of freedom that children have here, as they may choose to do things that will harm them and he feels helpless to intervene. In Liberia, if a child is doing something that may cause himself harm, another adult can intervene for the safety of the child without the risk of being sued or fined.

Although Jack is far away from his parents, he does stay in touch. He talks with them each week. "I use the calling cards. For \$2, I can talk for six minutes but for \$5, I can talk with them for sixteen minutes!"

Jack works for HMEA full time, a second human services agency full time and attends CCRI part time, studying to become a lab technician. Jack explained that in Liberia, many people who are ill are not diagnosed properly or given the full range of tests to determine the cause of an illness. He would like to open a lab in Liberia, which, at a low cost, would provide these services in a very short turnaround time, and that would ensure that the proper medication was prescribed. He would like to return to Liberia, set up a lab with his best friend from childhood who shares this same vision, and then return to America until he can retire. ◀

*Jack was interviewed by **Doug MacPherson**,
Diversity Committee member.*