



Sankofa *Deputation To The City of Toronto*

The Ghanaian-Canadian Association of Ontario

(GCAO)

Our Team

- **Emmanuel Duodu** - President of GCAO
- **Professor Joseph Mensah** - York University
- **Mary Akuamoah-Boateng** – VP, of GCAO
- **Professor David Firang** - Trent University



SANKOFA MEANING



To retrieve

To go back and get it

To go back for something good that one is at risk of leaving behind or loosing

Part of the Adinkra Symbols of the Akan people of Ghana

Emmanuel Duodu – Sankofa matters

- Our Community in Toronto (GTAA) and Ontario - Introduction
- What is Sankofa – origin and the symbolism
- Sankofa – Learning from the past and gain insight into current problems and structures
- Sankofa – Promotes empathy and understanding and allows to combat racism, prejudices and intolerance
- Sankofa - Gain deeper understanding of ourselves, communities and the world
- Sankofa - City of Toronto living up to its motto “Diversity of Strength”



Professor Joseph Mensah - Argument in Support of the SANKOFA naming

- **Importance of Learning from History**

- By studying the past, we gain insight into the roots of current problems, events, structures.
- It allows us to learn from our failures and successes.
- Promotes empathy and understanding, and allows us to combat racism, prejudices, and intolerance.

- **Cosmopolitanism and Touristic Attraction**

- The name Sankofa enhances the cosmopolitan outlook of the city—it shows that the city is nested in the global and international culture.

- **Paying Attention to Minority and Marginalized Groups such as Africans**

- It shows that the City acknowledges the presence and contribution of Africans who are often marginalized in the ethnic mosaic of Canada.

- **Increased Sense of Belonging and Identification with the City**

- Many Africans can relate to the name—there is a growing African presence, and this naming will enhance our sense of belonging. The naming reinforces our sense of identification with the city, in particular, and Canada in general.

- **Multiculturalism**

- **Integration**

- **Tie to Slave Trade**





The Case for **SANKOFA**

HISTORY: Importance of learning from the past (e.g., slave trade)

DIVERSITY: Fostering the City's motto: Diversity our Strength

COSMOPOLITANISM: Promotes Toronto as a true Global City

INTEGRATION: It is a two-way street: Majority Minority

MULTICULTURALISM: Reinforces multicultural sentiment

TOPOPHILIA: Merit of naming after a concept and not a person



Prof. Firang - Blacks: Ghanaian-Canadians

Some Noteworthy Facts

Ghana is almost at the center of the world: Long 1.2° W; Lat 7.9° N

The first Black African country to be independent:
6 March, 1957

Leader of anti-colonial and Pan-African movements

Home of Anton Wilhelm Amo (1703-1759); Yaa Asantewaa, Kwame Nkrumah, Kofi Anan, Kente, Ananse stories etc.

Ghanaian-Canadians are among the largest Black Continental African groups in Canada (Census: 35k)

We are in all spheres of Canadian life: Medicine, Education, Social Work, Sports, Music etc.

How Beneficial is it for Black Youth–Mary Akuamoah-Boateng

- A sense of belonging
- A sense of inclusion
- Enhance the sense of loyalty to the city of Toronto and Canada
- A great sense of pride





SANKOFA: Artistic Presentation

**Primary
Conditions**

The Bird

The Egg

The Neck go back

**Secondary
Conditions**

Colors: Green,
Yellow, Red and
Black of the Ghana
flag

Black Star

Blending with
other cultures will
be acceptable.



Note of Appreciation



We are grateful for the opportunity to present our thoughts in support of this naming process.



Your effort to honour us with this Sankofa naming is deeply appreciated.