



# Augustine E. Hammond Ghana

WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARD



**Augustine E. Hammond**  
Jem Afrik Creations Ltd.  
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## Jem Afrik Creations Limited



What began as a hobby in 1986 with one employee behind one hired machine had become a garment-production firm employing 50 permanent workers by 2006. Those employees work on various machines and equipment in a medium-sized textile production unit. Over the years, Jem Afrik has trained and empowered hundreds of personnel. Fifteen trained and mentored workers have been motivated to set up their own businesses and now work as subcontractors. The company has registered representatives in the United States, the Caribbean and Southern Africa.

My childhood experience in a neighbourhood where the majority of the residents were seamstresses and tailors inspired me to go into the business. I loved the skill they displayed in producing dresses and gowns from fabrics. The turning point came when I volunteered, planned and organized a fashion show while at university for a weekend entertainment programme. It was a hit, and after graduation I had a handful of devoted customers with which to start my business. After attending the inaugural Empretec entrepreneurship training workshop in 1990, I became aware of the opportunities that existed in the industry and

the potential that I could realize. Other business-development services to which I was exposed, i.e. export training, growth management and microcredit schemes, broadened my vision and horizon.

To grow and expand to the international market, I had to replace worn-out machinery and acquire new and appropriate tools to ensure continuous production in order to fill orders and meet the targets I had set. Through Empretec Ghana, one of the financial institutions with a stake in the Export Development and Investment Fund, I was able to get a loan and retool.

I encourage and employ effective communication skills, which all employees must develop to ensure the smooth operation of the work process. I try to ensure that all employees clearly understand and support the vision of Jem Afrik Creations. My vision is to establish a Fashion Design Finishing School in Accra to bridge the gap between the existing basic/intermediate level institutional training and the huge career and job opportunities on the international market.

### THE BUSINESS AT A GLANCE

*Jem Afrik is a Ghanaian-owned business that specializes in the design and production of Afro-ethnic clothing, including casual wear, business attire and evening dresses. Jem Afrik offers both off-the-rack collections and tailor-made clothing for women, men and children. The company started in 1986 and employs 55 people. It has affiliates on the African Continent, in the United States and in the Caribbean. In addition, 15 trained workers have been motivated to set up their own businesses and work as subcontractors. The company is currently planning to launch a fashion design finishing school in Accra, to build the skills necessary to take advantage of job opportunities on the international market.*

*The Ghanaian garment and textile industry benefits from special support schemes which are part of the President's Special Initiatives for private sector development launched in 2001. The industry is growing rapidly and generates one of country key's exports. Benefiting from international trade agreements such as the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, the value of Ghanaian textile and apparel exports to the United States, a major export destination, has surged from \$550,000 in 2002 to \$7.8 million in 2007. It is estimated that over 70,000 jobs will be created by the garment and textile industry in the next four years.*

### Contact

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