



**SXSW EDU® Announces First Keynote Speaker, Engineer, Educator, and Entrepreneur, Patrick Awuah Jr for 2019 Conference and Festival**

(September 26, 2018, Austin, TX) The SXSW EDU® Conference & Festival announces today that globally renowned engineer, educator, and entrepreneur, Patrick Awuah Jr, is participating in the ninth annual SXSW EDU as a keynote speaker in March 2019. Mr. Awuah, the founder and president of Ashesi University, is the first keynote speaker to be announced for this year's conference and a full slate of keynote speakers is expected to be named in the coming weeks.

In his upcoming SXSW EDU keynote Patrick Awuah will share his perspective on his learning journey — as a student in both the United States and his native country of Ghana — and how those experiences shaped his unique approach to higher education. Since founding Ashesi University in 2002, Mr. Awuah has implemented his strategy on how to best cultivate the large swaths of untapped educational opportunities in Africa. The university, which operates under a unique and progressive model, offers a limited number of majors and studies to foster critical thinking, entrepreneurship, ethics, and leadership. Leveraging an ethical and entrepreneurial mindset, Ashesi offers courses and degrees with an emphasis on infrastructure to position its students as thought leaders and global citizens prepared to support the world's foundational developments.

"Africa will be transformed under the leadership of bright young Africans who are educated in Africa, taught to think critically, to question, to solve problems and above all, to care," said Patrick Awuah, Jr. "I founded Ashesi to be the spark of a revitalized Africa. Ashesi is a catalyst for new enterprises and new solutions, and offers a new model for other universities in Africa."

"SXSW EDU prides itself on providing a platform for pressing topics impacting the global education industry, workforce development, and the interplay between teaching, learning, and preparing students for the workforce of the future," said Greg Rosenbaum, SXSW EDU General Manager. "We are so proud to serve as the stage for Patrick, a global education ambassador, who will undoubtedly shift our collective thinking. Patrick has served the education sector, specifically in his home country of Ghana which he loves so deeply, with his forward thinking and global perspective of how to move our interconnected world and its global workforce, more efficiently into the future as well-rounded and equipped citizens."

Mr. Awuah is the recipient of some of Ghana's highest honors such as The Order of the Volta (2007). In addition, he has received the John P. McNulty Prize (2009), the WISE Prize for Education (2017), a MacArthur Fellowship (2015), and was named one of the World's 50 Greatest Leaders by Fortune (2015). He is a 1989 graduate of Swarthmore College and former Microsoft software engineer.

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# SXSW EDU

**About SXSW EDU:** The SXSW EDU® Conference & Festival cultivates and empowers a community of engaged stakeholders to advance teaching and learning. The annual four-day event affords registrants open access to engaging sessions, immersive workshops, interactive learning experiences, film screenings, early-stage startups, business opportunities, and networking. SXSW EDU is a component of the South by Southwest® family of conferences and festivals. Join the passionate and innovative community at SXSW EDU, March 4-7, 2019 in Austin, Texas. For more information, please visit [sxswedu.com](https://www.sxswedu.com).

**Press Credentials:**

Press accreditation for SXSW EDU 2019 is now open at <https://www.sxswedu.com/press>

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