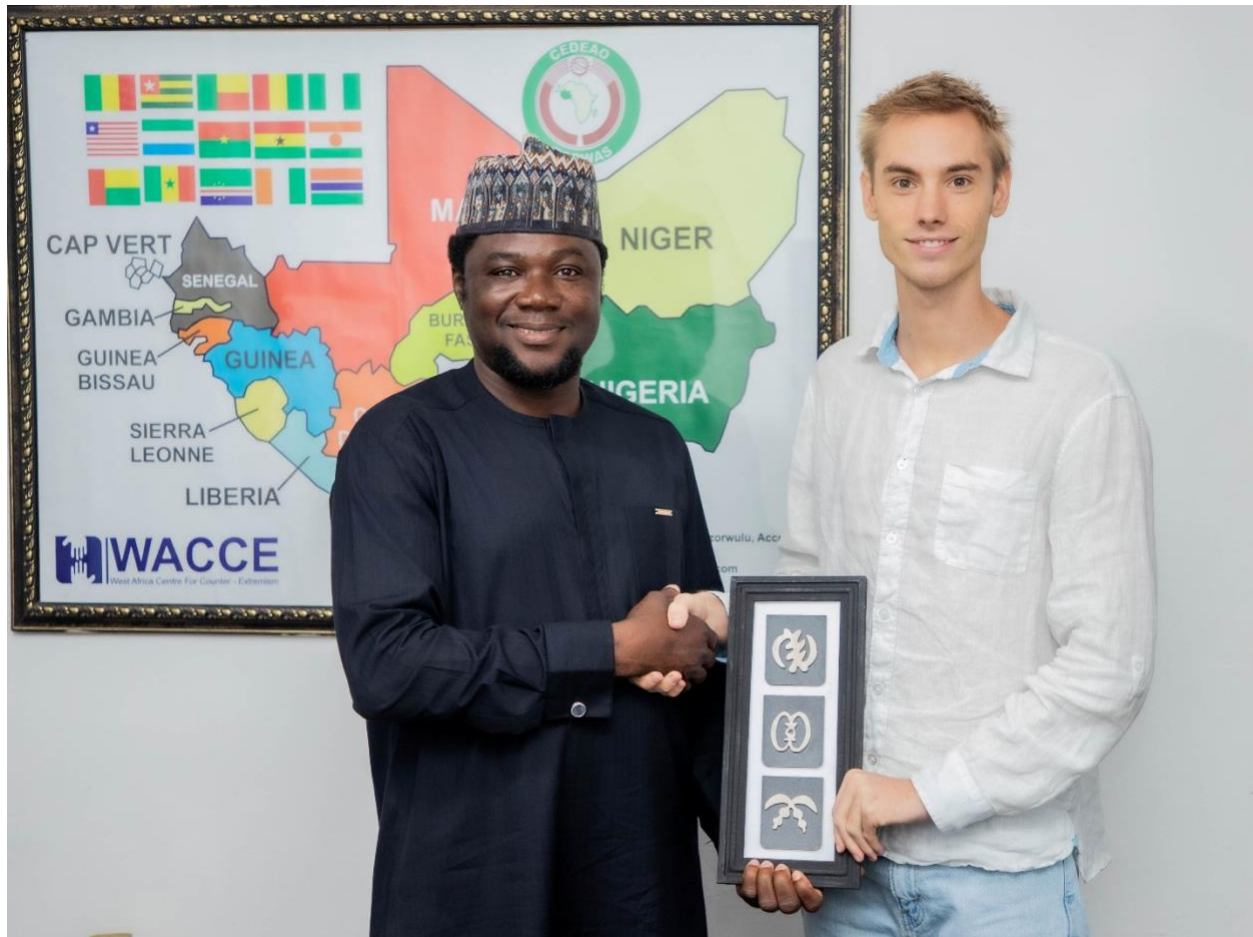


Benjamin Ellis, WACCE Intern 2025

Liberty University graduate student completes internship program in West Africa.



The West Africa Centre for Counter-Extremism (WACCE) has marked the successful completion of a two-month internship by Benjamin Ellis, a graduate student from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, USA. Ben was awarded the [Provost's Award for Research Excellence \(P.A.R.E.\) by the Helms School of Government, Liberty University](#) to undertake the two-month internship at WACCE. The P.A.R.E. award supports and advances student-led research and creativity across disciplines, equipping recipients for outstanding careers in public service and academia.

During his internship, Ben contributed to research projects focused on governance, regional security, political transitions, and extremism in Ghana and the broader West African region. He worked closely with the WACCE research team to produce analytical reports deepening his understanding of security, economic and governance challenges in the region.

Ben had the opportunity to engage high profile officials at the UNDP, the University of Ghana, the Presidency (Office of the Vice President of Ghana), Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC). Beyond the office, Ben took part in field visits that included tours of Accra, Cape Coast Castle and Kakum National Park, as well as a trip to the Cape Coast Technical University. These experiences enriched his cultural and historical appreciation of Ghana and the sub-region.



Benjamin holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Public Policy, with a concentration in Think Tank & Policy Research. He has played an active role in multiple research projects at Liberty University, focusing on themes such as regional instability, economic development, and maritime security in Africa. He aspires to serve as a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Department of State, a goal he says has been further strengthened by his internship experience at WACCE.

Reflecting on his time at the Centre, Benjamin shared, "I will never forget the experience of learning from and getting to know the WACCE team this summer. I'm grateful for the opportunity and the warm hospitality. I look forward to future collaboration between WACCE and Liberty University. I know many students back home would benefit from engaging with the WACCE team just as I have."

WACCE's director, Mutaru Mumuni, recognizes the valuable internship experience and commends Ben indicating that "Throughout the internship period, you demonstrated a high sense of discipline, purpose and commitment in pursuit of your academic and professional goals. Your open-mindedness and helpful conduct impressed us, and we are glad to continue to maintain a long term valuable relationship with you. So please let's stay in touch".