RICHARD ESSUMAN- PERSONAL STATEMENT

Growing up in Ghana, I was always that kid poking around in the backyard, fascinated by every bug and leaf. This curiosity stuck with me, leading me to study Animal Biology and Conservation Sciences with Botany at the University of Ghana. I graduated in 2019, and while I was deep into genetics and ecology, I noticed something interesting - the natural and digital worlds had a lot in common. It was like seeing the same patterns repeat in totally different spaces. I was fascinated by how information spread through social networks in much the same way that diseases spread in groups of people. Both follow similar patterns that can be described using math.

This realization made me know how my background in biology could offer unique insights into the digital world and this interdisciplinary perspective eventually led me towards cybersecurity, where I saw an opportunity to apply ecological principles to digital protection. After graduation, I embraced the opportunity to explore various aspects of technology and science and each role I took on, that is, from being a Medical Lab Scientist to Data Analyst broadened my perspective and reinforced my passion for innovation. These experiences were the steppingstones that brought me closer to my true calling.

The turning point came when I became an IT Specialist during the COVID-19 pandemic and with encouragement from my mentors, I decided to fully immerse myself in the tech world. I completed intensive programs in Full Stack Development at Codetrain Africa and honed my Front-End skills at Azubi Africa. I dove deep into JavaScript, React, and a whole toolkit of other technologies. Through this, I also discovered my capability for leading teams and thriving in collaborative environments.

With the rise of financial technology, I realized that combining a Master’s in Cybersecurity with my background in software development would equip me with the skills needed to become a cybersecurity professional focused on building secure, resilient systems. The deep understanding gained from these programs would allow me to design systems that protect sensitive data, prevent cyber-attacks, and ensure the reliability of digital platforms, which is essential in today’s digital world. This knowledge would enable me to make informed decisions that strengthen security frameworks, reduce vulnerability, and increase the operational efficiency of organizations by using predictive analytics to identify and mitigate risks.

The knowledge gained through cybersecurity would be valuable in educating the public on online safety, particularly helping the less privileged protect themselves from cyber threats and raising awareness about cybersecurity and offering guidance on safe online behavior, I aim to support my community's understanding of technology and help foster a safer digital environment for everyone.

I am versatile and adapt quickly to new environments, and I am highly motivated to pursue a Master of Science in Cybersecurity at your esteemed institution. New York Institute of Technology offers a well-structured, high-quality educational system that supports international students in adjusting to the academic and cultural environment. I am confident that the Cybersecurity program at New York Tech will equip me with the advanced technical and analytical skills necessary to excel in my career. This program will provide a strong foundation in protecting digital infrastructures, preparing me to make impactful contributions in the field and to achieve my long-term professional goals.