



**Chicago  
Chess Foundation**

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO  
FIND THE BEST MOVES

# USING CHESS TO BRING YOUTH TOGETHER ACROSS THE GLOBE

**Ghana-Chicago Chess Exchange**

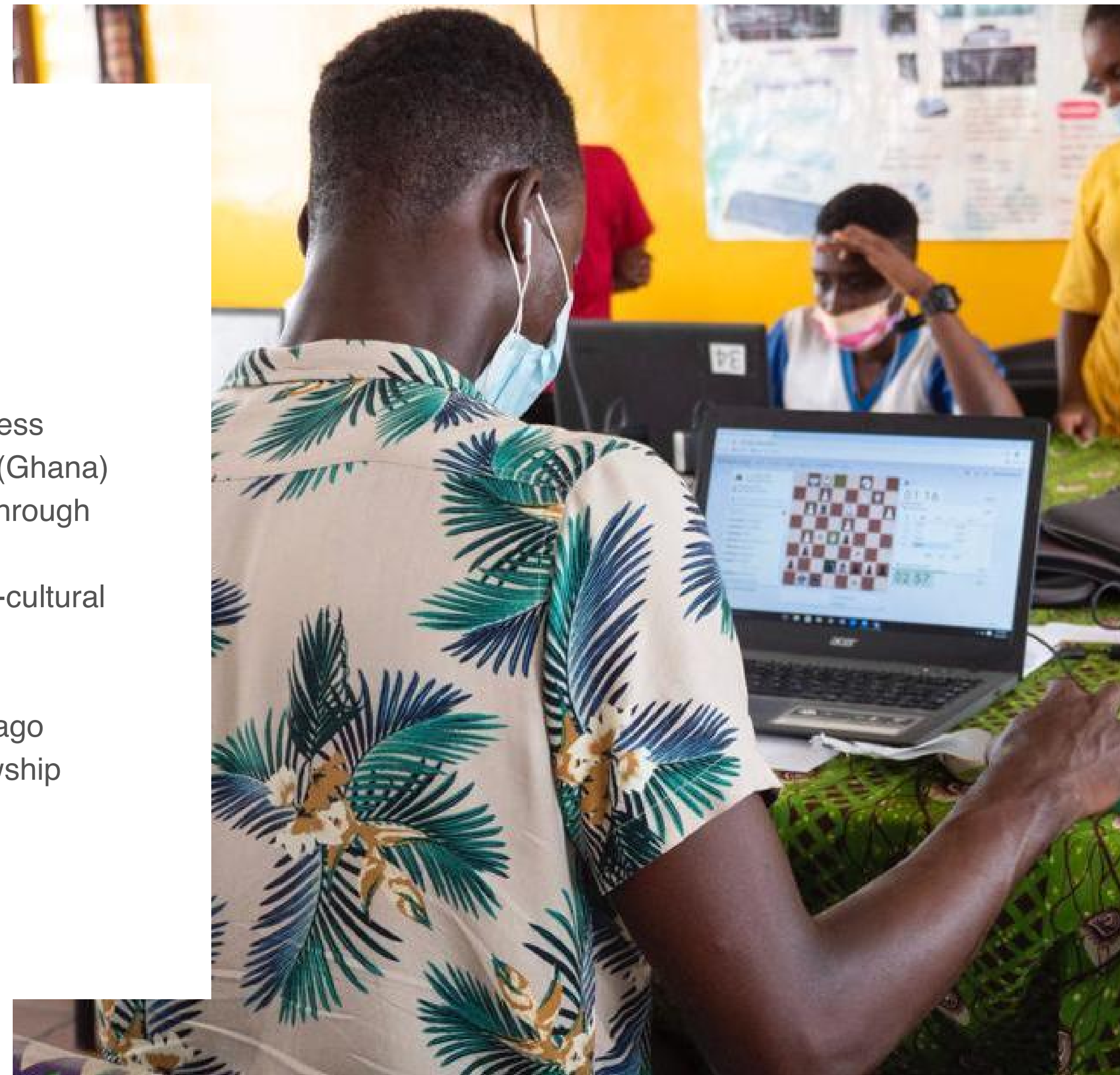


## 2020-2021 Online Chess Tournaments

# HOW IT BEGAN

In 2020, during the height of the pandemic, the Chicago Chess Foundation (CCF - Chicago) and B.A.S.I.C.S. International (Ghana) began a relationship with the goal of connecting our youth through chess. At a time when our youth were more isolated and disconnected than ever before, we wanted to foster a cross-cultural connection through the game.

Over the next 9 months 60 youth between Ghana and Chicago participated in monthly online chess tournaments and fellowship over Zoom.



# IN-PERSON EXCHANGE

March 30 - April 8, 2023

A partnership between



**Chicago  
Chess Foundation**

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**Funded by**



**U.S. Embassy Ghana**



**"We learned how to connect with each other and how to go about new friendships, new relationships."- Shadrack - Youth from B.A.S.I.C.S.**

# **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS SEAS**

A team of 6 youth from across Chicago, all participants in CCF's Chess Leaders Program, travelled to Accra, Ghana to share in a week of spring break festivities. Together with peers of their same age in Accra, the team toured multiple regions of Ghana, hosted learning workshops in chess, competed in chess tournaments and festivals, and developed relationships that transcend cultural and physical boundaries.

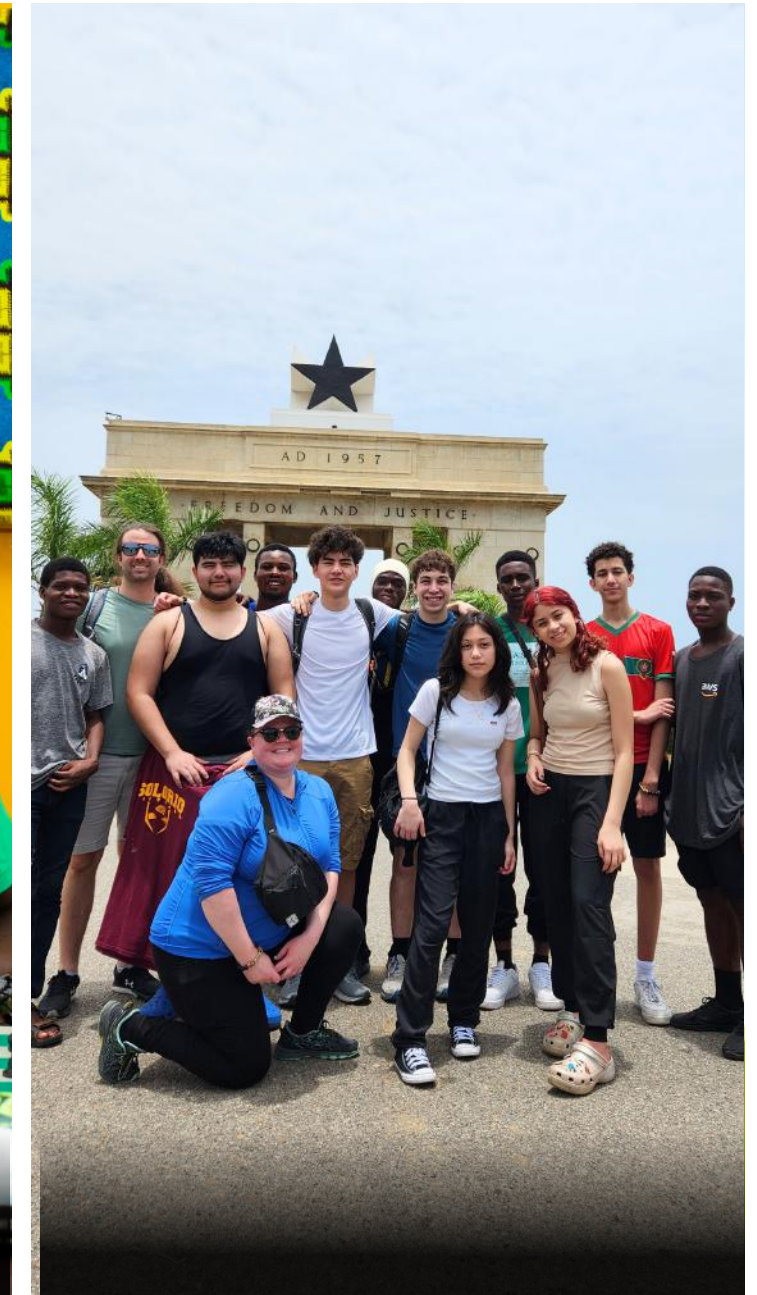
**Sharing Culture**



**Sharing Knowledge**

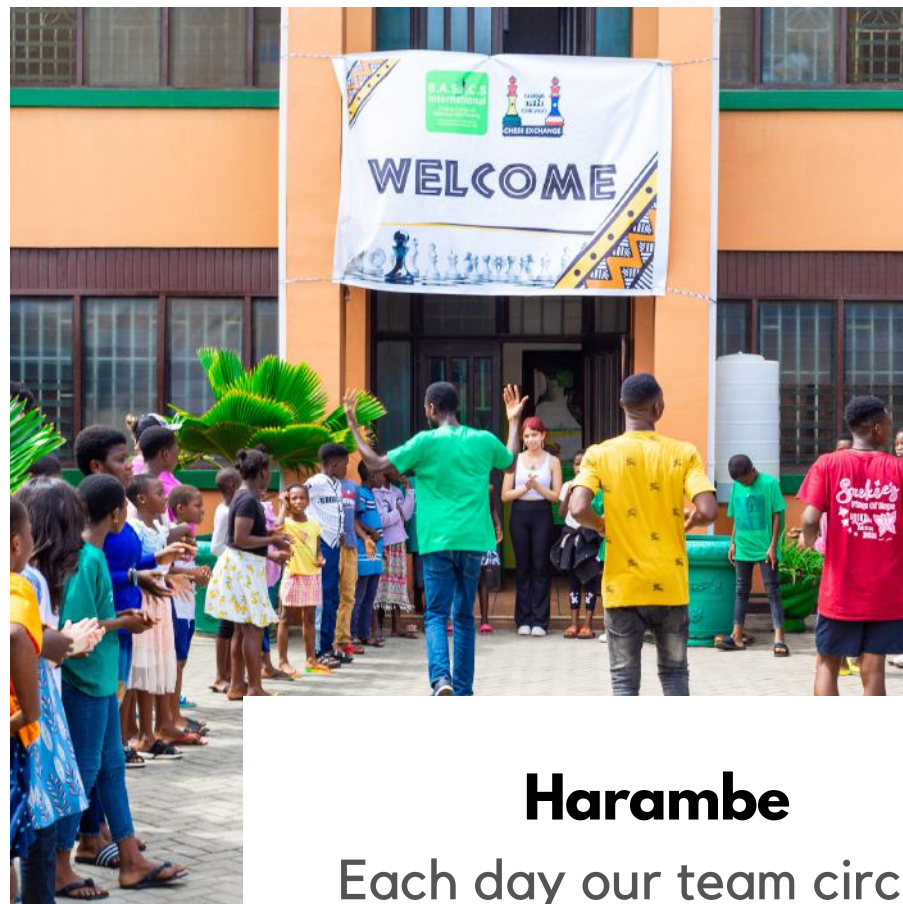


**Sharing Experiences**



# SHARING CULTURE

Our team stayed in the small fishing village of Accra known as Chorkor. B.A.S.I.C.S. International is located in this neighborhood, so we were living where we were serving. From walks through the town with the youth's peers, to learning and dancing at B.A.S.I.C.S, the team were together with their Ghanaian peers to share in the similarities and differences of their own life experiences



## Harambe

Each day our team circled with youth from B.A.S.I.C.S to sing, dance, and celebrate before sharing lunch.



## African Drumming

Our team learned the Kpangalo rhythm, a Ghanaian rhythm that became popular around the time of Ghana's independence.



## Celebrations

While in Ghana, our team celebrated a birthday and we learned a new way to celebrate - the B.A.S.I.C.S. way.

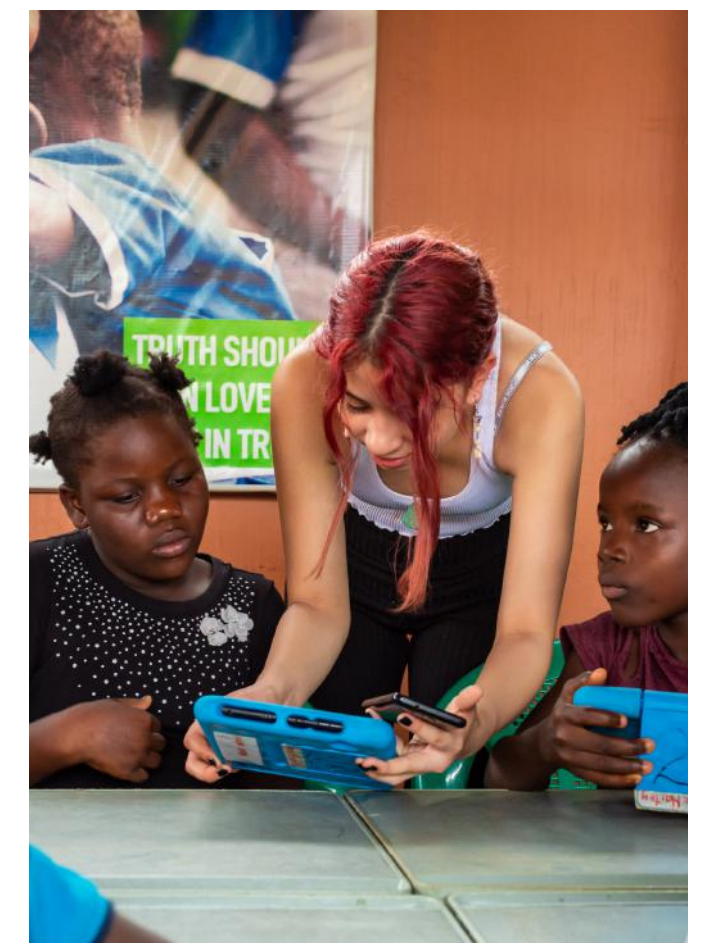


**"We shared games of chess, which was just really interesting because even though we don't share a lot culturally, we can still play with each other without any problems." Rayan - Youth from Chicago**

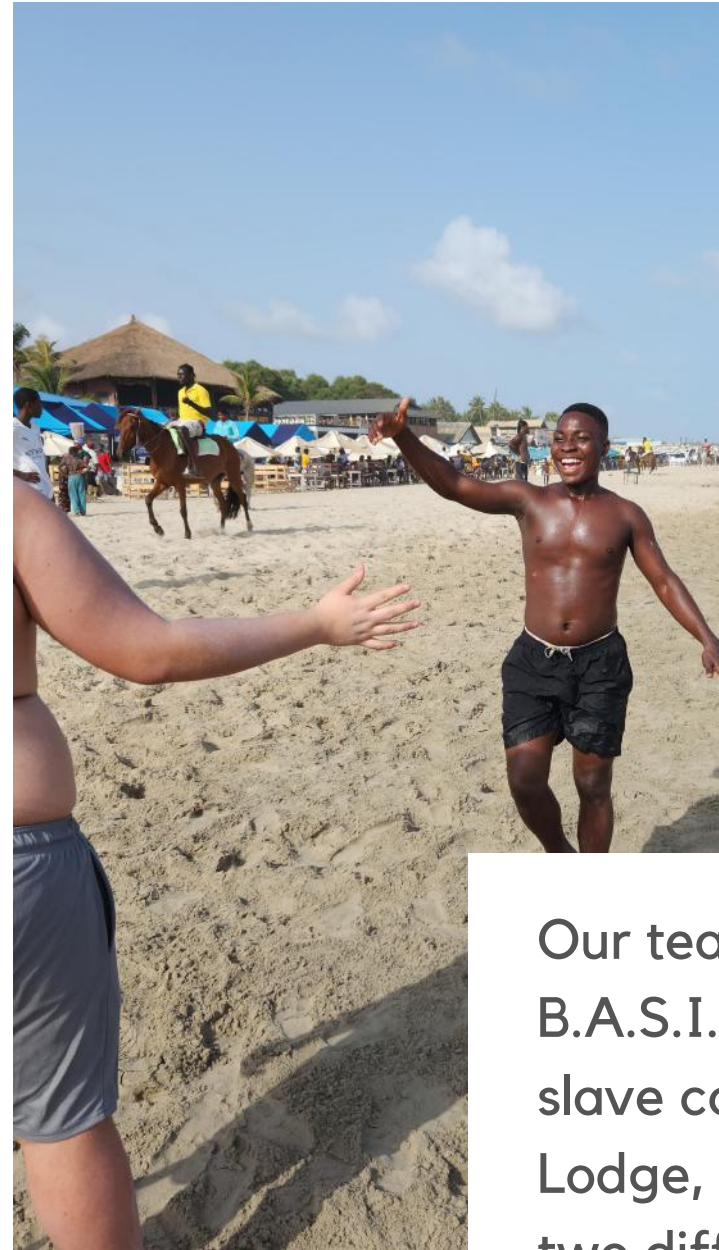
# SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Throughout the week, our youth hosted learning sessions in chess and video games, which are two passions of the youth we served. We shared our favorite mobile games and gave tiered chess instruction to the youth and staff of B.A.S.I.C.S.

In turn, we learned about different foods, dances, and life in the community from our new friends.



**"I've appreciated the trips, and I got to know some new place that I've never been to before." Jeremiah - Youth from B.A.S.I.C.S.**



Our team had a great opportunity to experience Ghana together with a group of B.A.S.I.C.S. youth. We toured Accra, crossed hundred-foot high rope bridges, visited slave castles, had a discussion at the U.S. Embassy, had a bonfire and swam at Stone Lodge, and hiked in Shai Hills. Through these excursions we grew together: youth from two different countries learning and sharing joy in ways that transform lives.



# SHARING EXPERIENCES

# THE CHESS EXCHANGE

## Blitz Tournament

We hosted a 10-round, Swiss-style, G/5 blitz tournament with players from B.A.S.I.C.S and the greater community.

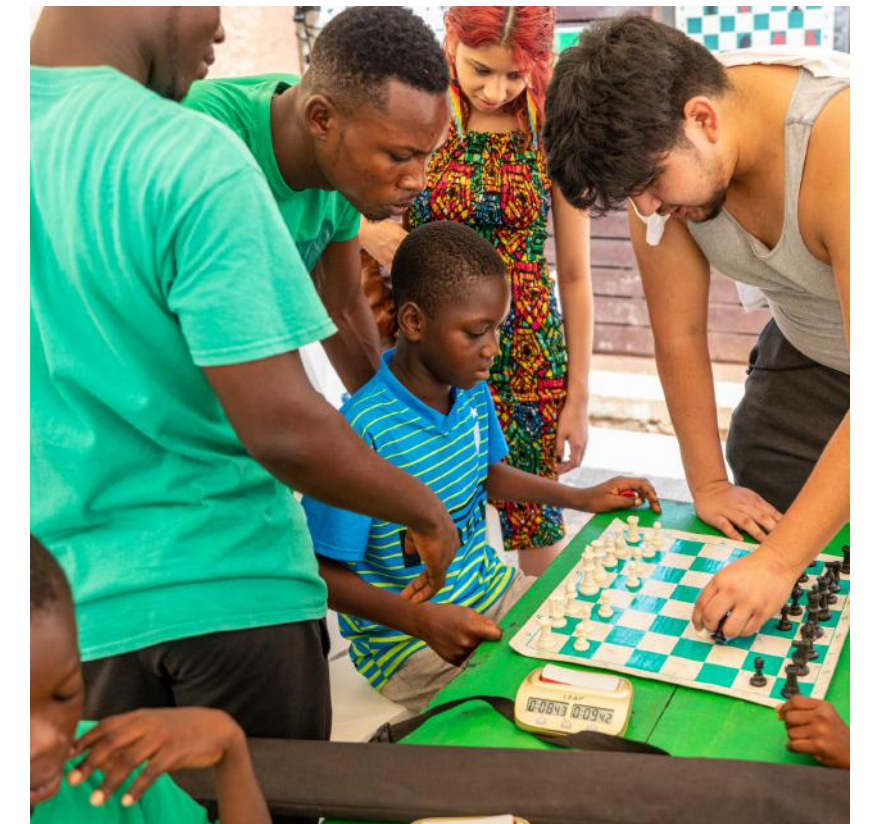


## Chess Festival

In the streets of Chorkor, we welcomed the community to a morning of casual chess games.

## Chess Learning

Throughout the week, beginners to the game were encouraged and taught the basics of the game.



## The Chess Tournament

We hosted a day-long, 7-round Swiss-style, G/20 rapid tournament for players U20 and U14.







# THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME



**"I think that the most important lesson I've taken from our trip is to take chances, especially when meeting new people." Mia - Youth from Chicago**

**"Something I learned is that even though we come from different locations and backgrounds we still can find something to connect about." Sam - Youth from Chicago**





# WHAT'S NEXT?

- **Our team hopes to return to Accra in 2024 to further build our relationship with B.A.S.I.C.S. International, and bring more chess opportunities to the youth of Ghana.**
- **We also hope to invite a team of Ghanaian youth to Chicago to reciprocate the hospitality and joy they shared with us.**

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

**Support the growth and sustainability of this project through the Chicago Chess Foundation**



## **Support the Chicago Chess Foundation Directly**

<https://chicagochessfoundation.org/donate>

## **Become a Trip Sponsor**

Contact Executive Director, Matthew Kearney  
[matthew.kearney@chicagochessfoundation.org](mailto:matthew.kearney@chicagochessfoundation.org)

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