

Impact of Oracle Academy's Continuous Support for Ameri-STEAM Bootcamp for Girls



Reported by Sylvie TANFLOTIEN, Founder

The 2024 Ameri-STEAM Girls Bootcamp in Côte d'Ivoire, held from August 2–30, 2024, brought together 70 young girls ages 13–20 from the of Abidjan, Adiaké, Assouindé, Kong, Mohame, Samo, Soubre, Tiapoum, Yaou, and Yamoussoukro.

The primary goal of the bootcamp was to educate, inspire and empower girls so they may overcome barriers that often discourage female participation in STEM fields. The program's objectives included exposing participants to STEAM careers, fostering hands-on and distance learning, building confidence, and providing mentorship. These were further enhanced by networking opportunities with professionals from diverse fields.

This year's theme, "**Mastering the Contemporary Business Landscape as a Female Professional,**" focused on setting clear career goals, understanding the necessary steps to achieve them, and outlining timelines for success. Through a combination of STEAM education and career development training, participants learned how to navigate the challenges they might face in the professional world.

Oracle Academy's role in providing free educational resources was essential to this endeavor. The girls had access to platforms like Java Fundamentals, Alice, and Greenfoot, enabling them to create 3D animations that addressed real-world problems affecting their communities. The goal was to equip them not just with coding skills but also with the tools to align their technical knowledge with future career opportunities.

2024 Bootcamp Focus

This year's bootcamp emphasized both technical proficiency and career planning. Each participant created a personal vision board outlining both short- and long-term professional aspirations. They then worked with mentors to break down these goals into actionable steps with specific timelines.

Participants learned:

- How to set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals for their career paths.
- The importance of networking and building professional relationships early in their careers.
- Steps for acquiring critical skills, such as coding, public speaking, and leadership, necessary for success in today's business world.
- Timeline planning: Participants developed detailed 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year plans to track their progress toward career milestones, such as internships, academic achievements, and leadership opportunities.

For example, one participant from the rural region of Kong set a goal to become a software developer specializing in health-tech solutions. Her 1-year plan involved enrolling in online coding courses (using Oracle Academy resources), participating in local hackathons, and applying for internships with tech startups. Her 4-year plan included completing a degree in computer science and launching a prototype for a maternal health app. Her 6-year plan aimed at securing a leadership role within a tech company or starting her own business.

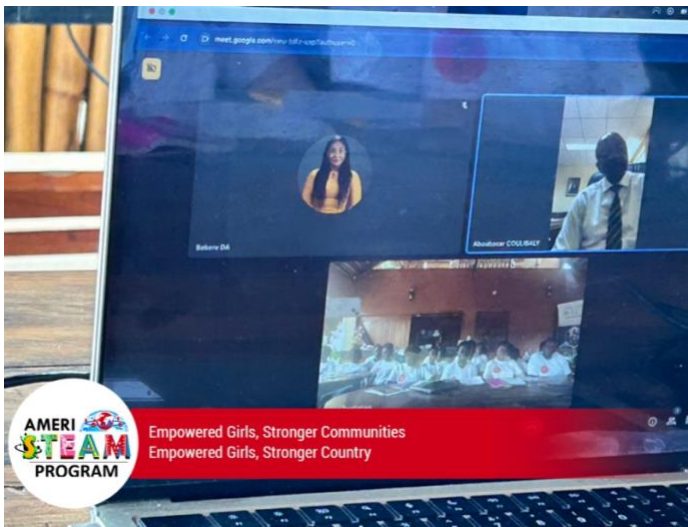
Remote Guest Speakers and Career Guidance

The bootcamp featured distinguished guest speakers who provided valuable insights into STEAM fields and career growth via video conference. Each speaker emphasized the importance of planning and execution in achieving professional goals:

- **Aboubacar Coulibaly** – Director of Technologies and Information Systems, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and African Integration and Diaspora of Côte d'Ivoire
 - "Achieving your career goals requires resilience, continuous learning, and leveraging opportunities like this bootcamp. Always have a clear vision and make strategic decisions along the way."
- **Dr. Edem Tetteh** – Dean, STEM Division, Rowan College at Burlington County, New Jersey, USA
 - "Only 30% of researchers globally are women. You are the future of technology, agriculture, and medicine, and you can help reshape these sectors by harnessing the power of technology like artificial intelligence and drones."
- **Tiffany Ruocco, Ed.D.** – Associate Professor/Program Chair, Graphic Design & Digital Media, Rowan College at Burlington County
- **Dr. Meral Muyesser** – Associate Professor of ESL / ESL Program Chair, Rowan College at Burlington County
- **Meredith Brown** – CCSP Career Services Advisor, Student Success Center, Rowan College at Burlington County
- **Dr. Sonya Armstrong** – Professor, Department of Mathematics & Computer Science, West Virginia State University
- **Dr. Louise Akanvou** – Director of Cooperation and Development Support at the Center for National Research in Agronomy of Côte d'Ivoire (CNRA)
- **Dr. Anna Lamikanra** – Blazing Trails International Center, Texas, USA
- **Dr. Hermann Judicaël Benié** – Assistant Director of Cooperation and Development Support at CNRA
- **Bekere Amassoma** – Oracle Academy Program Manager, Oracle Academy Program Manager for Sub-Saharan Africa

The bootcamp concluded with a mentorship session led by **Bekere Amassoma**, and **Aboubacar Coulibaly**, who shared words of wisdom with the participants.

Message from Bekere Amassoma:



"Oracle Academy is dedicated to advancing technology education by providing resources like Alice and Greenfoot for free. I'm delighted to be here with you today. Our focus on diversity and inclusion aims to encourage more girls to join the STEM sector because we recognize the significant gender gap in the tech industry. This is why we support programs like Ameri-STEAM – to train and empower more girls like you. I see that some of your mentors are former campers, and this is exactly what we want: breaking stereotypes and creating a cycle where you come back next year as mentors, inspiring even more girls to pursue STEM. Stay focused, resilient, and persevere."

Coding with Alice 3: Peer Tutoring by 2022 Ameri-STEAM Alumna Dion Marie Ange Debora :

"My name is Dion Marie Ange Debora, a medical student at Félix Houphouët Boigny University in Cocody. I first participated in the Ameri-STEAM Bootcamp in 2022 as a high school student from Lycée Moderne 1 d'Abobo. Over the years, the program has equipped me with invaluable skills in coding using Alice3, leadership development, and mentoring. In 2024, I proudly took on the responsibility of teaching coding to younger participants and was thrilled to witness their progress. Ameri-STEAM has changed my life, and I am committed to giving back to help more girls access the same opportunities."



Barry Bibata: "My name is Barry Bibata, and I am entering my junior year at Lycée Scientifique de Yamoussoukro. The Ameri-STEAM Program has been life-changing for me. Before attending it, I had never used a computer, let alone coded. Now, I am confident in my programming abilities, leadership skills, and career planning. I believe this program can help many more girls like me break free from societal limitations and achieve their dreams."

At the end of the bootcamp, participants expressed their gratitude to Oracle Academy and the Ameri-STEAM Program, affirming their newfound confidence, empowerment, and increased interest in STEAM fields.

Special Thanks to Oracle Academy

Ameri-STEAM is immensely grateful for Oracle Academy's generous and continuous financial support, which has been instrumental in covering essential costs such as communication and printing materials throughout the bootcamp. This support has allowed us to provide participants with vital educational resources and ensure the program runs smoothly. We appreciate Oracle Academy's commitment to empowering the next generation of female leaders in STEAM, and we look forward to continuing this impactful partnership in the years to come.

Conclusion

The 2024 Ameri-STEAM Girls Bootcamp successfully equipped participants with the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate both STEAM careers and the modern business world. Oracle Academy's resources, coupled with guidance from industry professionals, ensured that each girl left the program with a clear vision for her future, actionable steps to achieve her career goals, and a solid understanding of the timelines required for success.

As organizers, we are deeply grateful to Oracle Academy for their continuous support. This partnership has empowered young girls across Côte d'Ivoire to dream bigger and work diligently toward realizing their professional aspirations. We look forward to an increase and expansion of this partnership to impact even more young women in the future.

