CONSTITUTION OF THE GHANA ASSOCIATION OF RHODE ISLAND AND VICINITY
(APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE-AUGUST 2003)

NAME
Article 1

The name of the organization shall be “THE GHANA ASSOCIATION OF RHODE ISLAND” hereinafter referred to as “The Association”. The motto shall be “UNITED WE STAND”.

AIM
Article 2

To provide opportunities for Ghanaians and other members to meet and interact.

OBJECTIVES
Article 3.1

To organize, support and encourage participation of as many members and their families as possible in social activities.

   3.2 To promote programs of informational and educational activities to all members.

   3.3 To represent the interest of members within the community and U.S.A. at large.

   3.4 To mediate and resolve misunderstandings among members.

   3.5 To assist and protect members and fellow Ghanaians in difficulty where possible.

   3.6 To contribute toward Ghana and U.S.A. national development.

   3.7 To promote co-operation between the Association associations with similar interest.
MEMBERSHIP

Article 4.1

Membership shall be opened to all Ghanaians, their families and all persons who subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Association.

4.2 Notwithstanding article 4.1, membership of the Executive Committee shall be restricted to Ghanaians and their families.

4.3 Executive membership shall be restricted to a member who has been in good standing.

4.4 Executive membership shall be restricted to a member who has been in good standing for at least twenty four months.

4.5 The position of the President and the vice President shall be strictly reserved to a member who demonstrates exemplary Leadership qualities.

FEES/DUES

Article 5.1

All members shall pay an annual membership fee which shall be set at each Annual General Meeting by the Executive Committee and approval by majority of the membership present.

5.2 Any member who has not paid the monthly membership fee cannot participate in an election and cannot stand for an office until such member has fully paid up all dues owed.

5.3 Any member who has not paid the monthly membership fee cannot participate in any or all activities planned by the Association.

5.4 For the purposes of determining the amount of fees owed by existing members, the monthly membership fees shall be paid from January 1st of each year; new members shall pay membership fees effective from the date of becoming a member.
5.5 Any member who has not paid membership fees owed for a period of 3 (three) months shall cease to belong to the Association. Any member who re-apply to become a member after an absence of more three months, shall submit an application and the committee so appointed shall determine the penalty for re-admission (see amendment A2).

Article 5.6

A member has to be at least 21(twenty one) years of age to be registered as a member by their own merit.

Otherwise, may be considered as a student or as a member by virtue of parental affiliation.

A student or member by parental affiliation may be exempt from paying membership dues; nor should not be eligible to any membership benefit.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Article 6

The Executive committee shall consist of five members who shall hold the following offices:

* PRESIDENT
* VICE-PRESIDENT
* SECRETARY
* VICE SECRETARY
* TREASURER
* ASSIST. TREASURER
* THE ORGANIZING SECRETARY
* ASSIST. ORGANIZING SECRETARY
* The Chairpersons (also known as EX-OFFICIO) of all duly constituted Standing Committees of the Association or their representatives.
Article 6.2
Additional member(s) may be co-opted by the Executive Committee in the absence of any member or as may be necessary.

**DUTIES**
Article 7

Executive Members shall perform all duties entrusted by the association in good faith.

7.2 Members shall attend meetings and activities punctually and fully participate in the proceedings.

**FUNCTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
Article 8.1

The Executive Committee shall:

a. be responsible for the on
b. going management of the
   Association
c. submit recommendations for the amendments to the constitution and by-laws for the approval of the membership.
d. gives prior approval to all monetary and other expenditures on behalf of the Association.
e. act on behalf of the Association in emergencies.

**THE PRESIDENT**
Article 8.2

The President shall:

a. chair all general and executive meetings.
b. present an annual report at the Annual General Meeting.
c. represents the Association on all public matters or in consultation with the vice President, delegate such responsibility to any member of the Association.
THE VICE-PRESIDENT
Article 8.3

The vice-President shall act in the absence of the President and also be responsible for the Ghana affairs duties.

THE SECRETARY
Article 8.4

The Secretary shall:
   a. maintain minutes and records of all meetings.
   b. inform members of all matters relating to the proper functioning of the association.
   c. keep check on attendance to enforce membership in good standing status.

THE ASSIST. SECRETARY
Article 8.5

The Assistant secretary shall act in the absence of the Secretary and perform the duties of the Secretary.

THE TREASURER
Article 8.6

The Treasurer shall:
   a. be responsible for collecting the monthly membership dues and all contributions to the association that may be required from time to time.
   b. be responsible for the safe keeping of all assets of the Association.
   c. present annual audited financial report at the annual general meeting
   d. Keep check on monthly dues payments to enforce membership in good standing status.
THE ASSISTANT TREASURER
Article 8.7

The Assistant Treasurer shall act in the absence of the Treasurer and perform the duties of the Treasurer; including the accountability of the Association’s petty cash and purchases.

THE ORGANIZING SECRETARY
Article 8.8

The Organizing Secretary shall be responsible for planning all social activities and functions of the association. The Assistant Organizing Secretary shall assist the Organizing Secretary for planning all social activities and functions of the Association.

THE ASSISTANT ORGANIZING SECRETARY
Article 8.9

The vice Organizing Secretary shall assist the Organizing Secretary and all planning of Association Activities.

The vice Organizing Secretary shall act in the absence of the Organizing Secretary.

8.9a The Chairperson (a.k.a. Ex-Officio) of all Standing Committees such as:
   a. Fund Raising Committee
   b. Web Site Committee
   c. Cultural Education Committee
   d. Youth Association Committee
   e. Out Reach Committee
will be responsible to execute it’s assigned duties.

STANDING COMMITTEE DUTIES
Article 10

Committees are established to advise the Executives and to execute designated assignments of the Association as directed by the Board of Directors and approved by Members of the Association.
These Committee members shall be nominated by recommendation or by individual’s will to serve on the committee. The nominee shall accept and demonstrate interest to perform all duties entrusted to their best ability. These Committee members would not serve on term limit and would not be elected by the ballot box. But serve the Committee at self will.

FUND RAISING COMMITTEE:
Article 10a
The Fund Raising Committee is empowered with the responsibility to identify and acquire resources for support of the programs and operations of the Association; including unified advancement to strengthening the effectiveness of the Association. The Committee will consult with all areas of the Association with the view to obtain necessary resources for the implementation of the programs of the Association and its continuous development. It is authorized to engage in:
   a. Fundraising activities
   b. Grant writing
   c. Research into means to seek funding
The Fund Raising Committee will report to the President, Executive Committee and the members of the Association as may be required.

CULTURAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Article 10b
The goal of this committee is to educate our youth and the society that we live in about our rich culture. As we adopt and hold our new found home “America”, it is extremely necessary to maintain our African heritage and culture by interacting with the others and educating our youth.
The committee would be responsible to:
   a. organize cultural educational programs
   b. organizing cultural dancing training to our youth
   c. promote Ghana’s rich culture.
The Cultural Committee will work in concert with the Organizing Committee and report to the President, Executive Committee and the members of the Association.
WEB SITE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Article 10c
The purpose is to create and maintain an informative, educational and directive Web Site which represents Ghana Association and directs the public to our mission. The Committee would be assigned the responsibility to the:

- develop the Association Web Site
- update information
- Research into means to better serve the purpose of the Association.
- To focus to public education

The Web Site Committee will report to the President, the Executive Committee and members of the.

YOUTH ASSOCIATES COMMITTEE

Article 10d
The Ghana Youth Associates would be a youth organization within the Ghana Association. The Youth Associates Committee would be responsible to work in concert with the Cultural Committee; to organize educative activities to fulfill our cultural education mission. The Committee would be responsible to:

- direct and engage the Youth leaders
- planning activities
- provide provisions to achieve goals.

The Youth Associates Committee would report directly to the President, Executives and members of the Association.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Article 10e
This committee would work directly with the Secretary and the Treasurer. They would be empowered with the responsibility to track members who may be ‘missing out’ due to reasons such as illness, work, etc. The Committee would consult the Secretary and the Treasurer to obtain updated attendance and membership dues list. With this information they would able to:

- implement “member in good standing”
- contact members who are missing out
- pass on information
- establish ‘member friendly’ coalition.

The Outreach Committee would report to the President, Executive Committee and members of the Association.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Article 11

The Association shall have monthly meetings. The Annual meeting shall be held in December of each year. The Secretary shall give notice to each member at least fourteen days to the date of the meeting.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Article 12

A special general meeting may be called by a quorum of membership as defined in Article 14 with notice given to the secretary at least seven days in advance or in the case of emergency, the first weekend of said event; unless the majority of members present at the meeting vote otherwise, no business shall be discussed at any such meeting other than that which is specified in the notice or is relevant there to.

VOTING

Article 13

Voting for any office shall be done by secret ballot and other lesser situations by show of hands.

QUORUM

Article 14

A quorum for the Executive committee shall be made up of five persons.

14.1 The quorum for all meetings shall be fifty percent of members in good standing, or five members in good standing, which ever is the lesser number.

ELECTION, RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL OF OFFICER

Article 15

The election of Executive Officers shall be held every four years at the annual general meeting.
Article 15.1
Resignation from office shall be by letter to the Secretary.

Article 15.2
The President in consultation with Executive committee may appoint an interim replacement when a position becomes vacant; the position so affected shall be filled for the remaining term of their predecessor in office.

Article 15.3
A motion of no confidence shall be sponsored by a minimum of fifty one percent of members in good standing.

AMENDMENTS
Article 16

Duly proposed amendments to the constitution shall be submitted to the Secretary with names and signatures of a proposer and a seconder to the Secretary who shall then give due notice at least fourteen days in advance of the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

1. The proposer and the seconder shall meet the requirements set out in article 14.1; a majority of members in good standing is required for amending the constitution.

16.2 All by-laws may be amended by majority vote at the general meeting.

LIQUIDATION
Article 17

Upon dissolution of the Association, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes or to the Federal government or the State or Local government for public purposes.

ARTICLE 18

18.1 THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
On recommendations of the Executive Committee, the Association at its Annual Meeting shall appoint the Board of Directors whose term of Shall be five (5) years.
18.2 THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Board of Directors shall be made of individuals who have distinguished themselves in their fields and whose knowledge, wisdom, expertise experience and human, material and financial resources could be tapped for growth and sustainability of the Association. The number of the Board of Directors shall not exceed eleven (11).

18.3 CHAIRMAN & SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Members of the Board of Directors shall elect the Chairperson and the Secretary from among their membership.

18.4 FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTORS-ADJUDICATION & ARBITRATION.
Board of Directors shall be the final arbiter in any disputes within the Association; and it shall be the final authority in the interpretation of the constitution of the Association.

18.5 PROTECT THE MISSION AND VISION
Board of Directors shall guard and protect the Mission and Vision of the Association and to provide strategic plan and programs for implementation.

18.6 FUNDING
Board of Directors shall source funding and also ensure adequate funding And financial sustainability of the Association.

18.7 PUBLIC RELATIONS
Board of Directors and the Executives shall represent the Association at Social, Economic and Political gatherings where the Association is invited.

On recommendation from the Executives, the Board of Directors shall represent the Association, in the situation where the Executives could not
DEATH AND FUNERAL-PRIVELEDGE

a. Should a member bereaved by the death of a Spouse or a Parent; the bereaved member shall petitioned to the Association for assistance to lead the planning of the final funeral rites.

b. The bereaved member shall then sign a promissory note to the Association that all monies spent on the planning of the funeral rites shall be fully paid after the final funeral rites observed; and that the Association shall reserve the right to engage legal professional help should that become necessary to retrieve monies spent on the occasion. The bereaved member shall also agree to pay all legal fees.

c. The President shall appoint a team to organize the final funeral rites with the bereaved member or his/her appointee.

d. The Association’s expenditure on the occasion shall not exceed ($1,500.00) one thousand five hundred US dollars.

e. The Association shall work in concert with the bereaved member or his/her appointee to record all private donations including donations received during the final funeral rites observation.