



News Release

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Alaffia Founder Olowo-n'djo Tchala named winner of Pacific Northwest EY Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2018 Award

Seattle, WA – EY today announced that Olowo-n'djo Tchala, CEO and founder of Alaffia, has received the Pacific Northwest Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2018 Award in the “Mold-Breaker” category. The award recognizes entrepreneurs who are excelling in areas such as innovation, financial performance and personal commitment to their businesses and communities. Tchala was selected by an independent panel of judges, and the award was presented at a special gala event at the Westin Seattle on June 15, 2018.

In his acceptance speech, Tchala dedicated the award to his mother, Ina, who passed away in 2016, and talked about the many values she instilled in him that have governed his life as an entrepreneur.

“We grew up in 8X10 room, but when the sun is up, you know it is time to work. When the sun goes down, it is time to go to sleep. So I learned hard work,” he said. “So, on her behalf, I will continue to do what I have always done, to empower women in West Africa through the private enterprise, and at the same time creating jobs here in the state of Washington so that the families in America, they too, can feed their families.”

Alaffia employees and contract “gatherers,” who are mostly women, number more than 14,000 in West Africa. They collect shea nuts, coconuts, herbs and grasses, and, at Alaffia fair-trade cooperatives in Togo and Ghana, create shea butter, coconut oil, baskets and essence used in Alaffia beauty and body care products. These raw materials are then shipped to Alaffia’s manufacturing plant in Tumwater where 145 people are employed. The materials are refined, packaged and prepared for distribution throughout the U.S. and 10 countries.

Alaffia’s non-profit empowerment and sustainability initiatives have resulted in 59,775 trees planted, 34,640 school supply recipients, 8,253 bikes distributed, 25,588 eyeglasses donated, 12 schools constructed and more than 4,832 babies safely delivered in West Africa.

Now in its 32nd year, the EY Awards program has expanded to recognize business leaders in more than 145 cities and more than 60 countries throughout the world. Previous recipients have included such notables as Howard Schultz of Starbucks and John Mackey of Whole Foods Market.

Regional award winners are eligible for consideration for the Entrepreneur Of The Year National competition. Award winners in several national categories, as well as the Entrepreneur Of The Year

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National Overall Award winner, will be announced at the Entrepreneur Of The Year National Awards gala in Palm Springs, California, on November 17, 2018. The awards are the culminating event of the Strategic Growth Forum®, the nation's most prestigious gathering of high-growth, market-leading companies.

About Alaffia

[Alaffia](#) was founded in 2003 in the Olympia, Washington garage of husband and wife team, Olowo-n'djo Tchala and Prairie Rose Hyde. Alaffia crafts popular beauty and body care products using traditional African methods. Alaffia is "Fair for Life" certified by the Institute for Marketecology (IMO), one of the most renowned international inspection and certification agencies for organic and fair trade accountability. Alaffia's non-profit empowerment initiatives have resulted in 59,775 trees planted, 34,640 school supply recipients, 8,253 bikes distributed, 25,588 eyeglasses donated, 12 schools constructed and more than 4,832 babies safely delivered in West Africa. To learn more, visit Alaffia.com.

For downloadable photos of the award event, credited to Alaffia, visit [here](#).

To learn more about the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year® awards, visit: ey.com/eoy.