

Jessica Matthews: Turning Play into Power

Jessica Matthews is an inventor who blends technology with social good. Born in the United States to Nigerian parents, Jessica grew up experiencing two different cultures. This unique background inspired her to think about global challenges in new ways.

At just 19 years old, Jessica and her classmates in a college class came up with a unique idea: a soccer ball that could generate electricity. The idea came to Jessica during a family trip to Nigeria, where she saw people struggling without reliable electricity. The Soccket Ball looks like any other soccer ball, but it has a special feature. As you play with it, the ball captures the energy from being kicked and rolled. After a game, this energy can power small devices like LED lights. For many families without regular electricity, this invention can make a big difference.

Despite gaining high-profile support, the product faced challenges. Many balls broke shortly after being used, failing to meet the promised three-year lifespan. Criticism and negative headlines followed. The company that Jessica founded, Uncharted Play, admitted to mistakes but promised improvements.

Despite these setbacks, Jessica and her company, Uncharted Play, have continued to work on energy solutions. A recent invention is a jump rope that generates electricity. Jessica's goal is to provide clean, renewable energy to people around the world, especially in places where electricity is scarce. Jessica is proof that even a fun activities like playing soccer or jumping rope have the potential to solve serious problems.

