



CHAT

With

Ms. Scholastica AYUK,

1st Vice President

OOSA National

Interviewer:

I want to start by thanking you for taking the time to conduct this interview for the OOSA North America third annual convention. Could you please give our readers a brief introduction to who Ms. Scholastica Ayuk is?

Scholastica Ayuk

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview and participate in the third OOSA North America annual convention.

Regarding my background, I am Ayuk Scholastica, an alumna of Government Technical High School Ombe, formerly known as Government Technical College Ombe. I attended GTC Ombe from 1986 to 1989 and earned a CAP certificate in the Commercial Option Office Clerk program. I then continued my education at GTHS Kumba, where I obtained both the Probatoire and Baccalaureate G1 certificates.

With this solid educational foundation, I was employed as an Administrative Assistant in the Technical Control Department at the National Oil Refinery Company (SONARA) in Cameroon. I have 26 years of experience working in this capacity at the institution.

Interviewer:

Upon completing primary school, you had the opportunity to attend any secondary grammar school of your choice. Could you share with us why you chose a technical education, specifically Ombe College?

Scholastica Ayuk

My passion for technical education, particularly in administrative duties, was evident from the time I finished primary school. Choosing to pursue my studies at the prestigious and renowned institution west of Mungo was a step towards realizing my dream of becoming a well-trained and qualified professional in administrative work. Attending Ombe College, the citadel of technical education west of the Mungo, was a significant accomplishment for me.

Interviewer:

Could you describe your student life at Ombe College? Feel free to include some high and low moments, as well as any anecdotes that might interest our readers.

Scholastica Ayuk

My student life was filled with fun, discipline, and mischief. I had the opportunity to receive a quality education from highly qualified teachers who played dual roles as both parents and educators, ensuring my success in my academic career. They also instilled in me the values of integrity, making me an outstanding representative of GTC Ombe.

As a day student, I stayed with my uncle on the school campus because girls were not allowed to stay in the boarding house. This situation, rather than being a challenge, provided me with opportunities for adventure. I often joined the boarding students in their mischief.

Interviewer:

Interesting! Could you please share with our readers some of those adventures you and your male colleagues took and the consequences, if any?

Scholastica Ayuk

First, although I was a commercial student, I frequently interacted with the boys from the industrial department. I made close friends with many of them and was quite comfortable among them and participated in many of their adventures. Because of my dark skin, they nicknamed me "BLACK SHADOW." Together, we would embark on adventures, such as sneaking into the "Last bush" to steal sugar cane from the dormitory opposite the school (SOCAMIT). In one of our adventures, we were caught and brought to school, where the principal at that time Mr. Effiong lashed us for invading a sugarcane farm. Although that did not stop us completely from those adventures, it slowed us down.

Interviewer:

How do you think these experiences contributed to the person you are today?

Scholastica Ayuk

I owe who I am today to the solid academic foundation I received as a technical student, where I was trained to be competent and self-reliant. I am proud of the services I provide to the public, utilizing the skills I gained from my education. My ability to serve the public in my professional career is thanks to Ombe and I hold it in great pride.

Speaking of regrets would be an overstatement, as being a student at Ombe was a source of admiration and respect within my community. Enrollment in this prestigious institution was

highly regarded, thanks to the self-discipline and integrity instilled in us. Our teachers not only guided us on campus but also ensured we upheld these values outside of school.

Interacting mostly with boys during my schooling years also strengthened my resilience. Studying, playing, and sometimes fighting together fortified my academic journey. Despite the challenges, the boys were protective, fostering a sense of self-awareness in my daily school activities. I was privileged to carry out internship with documentations without any second thought by the proprietors because of the outstanding training as a student I acquired in Ombe.

Interviewer:

Before we get to your professional life, do you have any advice to the current and future students of the college?

Scholastica Ayuk

My advice to current students regarding technical education is that it offers a valuable opportunity to gain knowledge and skills for self-reliance. Today, technical education has shattered the myth that it is only for disadvantaged children or those from underprivileged households.

The current generation, growing up in the digital age, needs to be intellectually, physically, and morally upright to fully benefit from the modern era of technical education, which now embraces digitalization. With this quality of education, I assure the younger generation aspiring to pursue technical education that the future society will depend on their intellect and skills to make the world a better place and transform Cameroon into a hub of industrialization.

Interviewer:

Thank you for that spirited argument for technical education and advice to current and aspiring students. Please talk to our readers about your life post Ombe college.

Scholastica Ayuk

As I mentioned earlier, with a strong educational background from Ombe, I was employed as an Administrative Assistant in the Technical Control Department of the National Oil Refinery Company (SONARA) in Cameroon, where I have accumulated 26 years of experience.

Driven by my passion for my job and the need to adapt to the digital age to enhance my work, I enrolled in a professional and business academy in Buea. There, I obtained a diploma

in computer science. Currently, I am pursuing a course in marketing, which will culminate in earning a Higher National Diploma (HND).

Interviewer:

I understand that SONARA is a difficult place to work as there are many levels of complexities involved. How were you able to navigate your way through all that?

Scholastica Ayuk

You are absolutely right. It was not easy. However, putting in 26 years is no small time. Let me state that I recently parted ways with the cooperation, seeking to take up different challenges in life. However, back to your question, the secret is that I kept my head squarely focused on my job, not letting things distract me. Once you demonstrate your worth and do not get into other people's business, success is more or less guaranteed.

Interviewer:

I hear you have also ventured into politics. Please share that experience with our readers.

Scholastica Ayuk

Certainly. I am originally from Eyumojock sub-division in Manyu Division. I believe that every Cameroonian is a politician. You may choose to be active or passive. If you choose the former, you let others decide for you but if you choose to be active, you contribute in the policies that define the society. I choose to be active and I became an elected councilor of the Eyumojock council. Although I live in Limbe, I participate fully in the deliberations.

Interviewer:

That is great to know. You have also been recently elected first vice president of OOSA national. Congratulation. In this position and especially as a woman, please share with us how you got there, the challenges thus far and the vision you share as part of leadership.

Scholastica Ayuk

After being elected as the 1st Vice National President, and becoming the first female alumna to hold this esteemed position, I felt a mix of humility, joy, anxiety and immense privilege. It was an honor to demonstrate my leadership skills in service to my alma mater, applying the values I gained during my school years and professional career to benefit the younger generation.

Regarding my challenges, it is often a significant obstacle for a woman to hold a decision-making position among her male counterparts in our context. There is a perceived incompatibility in decision-making due to my gender. Nonetheless, I am not deterred, as I have strong support from female alumnae, also the male ones and the president who have been coaching me and providing positive ideas.

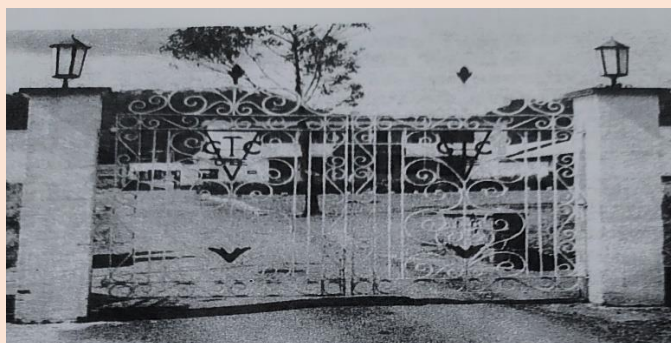
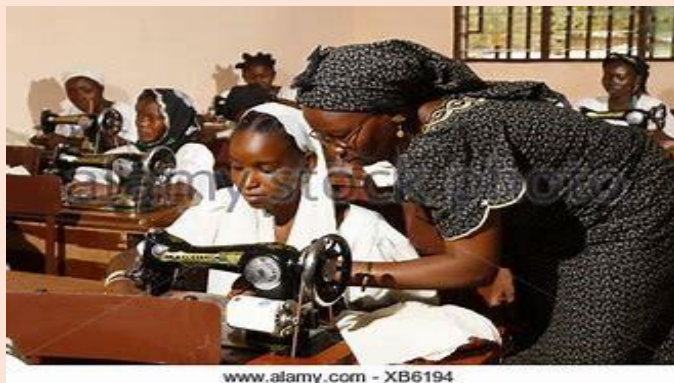
I urge all alumni, both at home and abroad, to unite their efforts as members of the same ancestral academy and work towards restructuring technical education west of the Mungo. I call upon everyone to recognize that a single hand cannot tie a bundle and to ensure that, through our collective efforts, we can achieve a lot.

Interviewer:

Thank you very much for your time and for sharing so much with our readers. Before I let you go, any parting thoughts?

Scholastica Ayuk

I just want to express how proud I am of you, the presidents of OOSA North America and OOSA Global, for your tireless efforts in organizing this association abroad and showcasing our pride as students from this great institution. I wish you a very successful convention.



"Technical Education
is not learning of the
facts, but the
training of the mind
to think"

Albert Einstein