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ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH
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ESSCA-USA YOUTH CONFERENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS

JULY 10TH-11TH, 2021

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THANKS AND APPRECIATION

- I would like to thank you all for taking time from your busy schedules to attend this conference. It is an honor indeed to see you all here today.
- Thank you, Reta Kitara Secretary of ESSCA-USA Youth Affairs for the hard work and commitment to make this conference a reality, particularly in raising the concerns of the youth and in mobilizing all our youth to participate in this conference.
- My thanks and appreciation, Lucy Lako, Secretary of Women Affairs, Falabia Edward, Secretary of Education and Social Affairs, and Jackson Lako, Deputy Chair of the Board of Directors, ESSCA-USA; and all our young people who worked hard and dedicated their time, and financial resource to make this conference a reality.

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ABOUT MYSELF

- My name is Jane Kani Edward. I am the President of ESSCA-USA.
- I teach at Fordham University, in the Bronx, New York.
- I also carry out research among African immigrants in the Bronx.
- I live in the state of New Jersey, and I am married and a mother of two children.

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MY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- My community engagement spans from South Sudan, through to Egypt, Canada, and the United States.
- I joined ESSCA-USA in 2011.
 - I served as Secretary of Women and Youth Affairs (2011-2014), and Secretary of Women Affairs (2014-2017) respectively.
- I was Acting President of ESSCA-USA from Jan. 16 – Sept. 2, 2017.
- I was elected President of ESSCA-USA in September 2017, in Atlanta, GA., and again in September 2019, in Dallas, Texas.

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VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

My vision for ESSCA-USA is:

- To foster progress, togetherness and peaceful coexistence among Equatorians in the United States and at home through community engagement, socio-cultural enrichment, and promotion of education, especially for the younger generation.

My guiding principles include:

- Honesty and open communication;
 - Transparency and accountability;
 - Strong commitment to public service, and team work; and
 - Mutual respect, integrity, and excellence in serving the community.
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ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH 2004 – PRESENT

Organization of Presentation

- About ESSCA-USA Secretariat of Youth Affairs
- Chronology of ESSCA-USA Engagement with Youth:
2004-Present
- Office Holders of the Youth Secretariat
- Conclusion

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ABOUT ESSCA-USA SECRETARIAT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

- The Secretariat of Youth Affairs as a separate office within ESSCA-USA was established in 2014 during the second term of Kwaje Lasu's Presidency.
- The Secretariat of Youth Affairs is headed by a Secretary, and deputized by Assistant Secretary as per ESSCA-USA Bylaws amended in 2017.
- Prior to 2014, youth concerns were discussed within the overall context of education, women, gender, youth, and social issues.
- Certainly, ESSCA-USA takes the role and concerns of our young people seriously. Youth are the current and future leaders not only of the association but of Equatoria and South Sudan as well.

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ABOUT ESSCA-USA SECRETARIAT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

- Article 7, sections 17 & 18 of the Bylaws outline the role and duties of the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Youth as follows:
 - The Secretary shall be a liaison between the youth of ESSCA-USA and the executive body. Additionally, the Secretary “shall deal with youth and specify issues that affect Equatorian youth, shall foster and maintain a cohesive body of the youth and shall propose and implement strategies that bring Equatorian youth together.”

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CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH: 2004-PRESENT

2004 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Des Moines, Iowa

- The earliest initiative on promoting youth issues dates back to 2004, when a paper on “Empowering the Youth,” was presented by Lino Lokonobei, during the 4th ESCA-USA annual conference, held in Des Moines, Iowa.
- The paper focused on the role and place youth occupy in then Sudanese society, and in particular, their impact on the legacy of the struggle for peace and freedom.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2007 Women and Youth Workshop, Denver, Colorado

- On May 26-27, 2007, the Secretariat of Education, Youth and Women Affairs under the leadership of Rose Oduho, and Micklina Kenyi, organized a women and youth workshop, in Denver, Colorado.
- No much information is available about this workshop.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2008 Youth Workshop in Buffalo, New York State

- On May 25th, 2008, the Secretariat of Education, Women, Youth, and Cultural Affairs under the leadership of Agnes Hilary, held a women and youth workshop in Buffalo, New York state.

Topics discussed included:

- Parents' relationship with youth, the role of Equatorian community leaders, financial issues, and cultural dilemma particularly for youth or the second generation who are caught between two cultures – the American mainstream culture and South Sudan/African cultural heritage of their parents or the older generation.

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CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2012 ESSCA-USA, Annual Conference, NC

- During the 12th ESSCA-USA annual conference in Greensborough, North Carolina, the Secretariat of Women and Youth Affairs under my leadership, organized a panel on “Challenges Facing Equatorian Youth in America.” Two panelists, Dominic Suru and Daud Repent, discussed the main challenges facing Equatorian youth in the United States, and the way forward.



CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2013 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Lansing, Michigan

- The 13th ESSCA-USA Annual Conference in Lansing, Michigan, 2013 theme “*Empowering and Investing in Equatorian Youth,*” was meant to position youth issues and interests at the center of the association’s programs.
 - Topics discussed included education, youth personal growth, social, political, and cultural groupings, parental responsibility and involvement in children’s education, and financial responsibilities and management.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2015 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Louisville, Kentucky

- In the planning of the 15th Annual Conference held in Louisville, Kentucky, it was proposed that ESSCA-USA should convene separate women, men, and youth workshops at the conference to discuss issues of concern to each group.
- This was done to encourage youth to focus on issues of interest to them. This conference format was adopted in the subsequent ESSCA-USA annual conferences.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2016 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN

- In 2016 the Secretariat of Youth Affairs under the leadership of Agnes Silvestro, organized a youth panel during the 16th ESSCA-USA Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota in September 2016.
- Several youth presented papers on the vision and mission of youth in the United States and in South Sudan.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2017 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA

- A workshop of youth was convened during the conference to discuss issues of concern to the youth including the association and the larger community of Equatoria; and how to forge unity and collective understanding of issues among Equatorians in Diaspora and in the homeland.



CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2018 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Omaha, Nebraska

- The 18th ESSCA-USA annual conference held in Omaha, Nebraska, in 2018, was one of the gatherings that witnessed an elevated engagement of youth on both days of the conference.
 - On the first day, four youth from Nebraska delivered a presentation, titled “Compromising as One,” which emphasized the importance of bridging between the older and younger or first and second generations through family and cultural history, and conversation.
 - On day two, two female participants who attended the youth and Students conference held in Lansing, Michigan on July 29, 2018, presented their perspectives on intergenerational relations through poem reading and presentation.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

2019 ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Dallas, Texas

- The theme of the 2019 conference in Dallas, Texas, “*Going Forward Together: The Role of Elders and Youth in our Community*” centered on the relationship of elders and youth.
- The youth were encouraged to participate in panels and workshops. There were two youth keynote speakers during the conference, Julia Gildo and Samuel Lazarus from Michigan and Nebraska, respectively.
- Similarly, Agnes Sisto and Ruta Winnie Lako, members of the youth group in Texas, held a panel discussion titled “Mental Health: A South Sudanese Problem,” on the first day of the conference.

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CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT... YOUTH ONLY CONFERENCES (2018, AND 2019)

- In 2018 Youth and Students Conference was held in Lansing, Michigan on July 29, 2018, organized jointly by the Secretariat of Youth Affairs and Secretariat of Education and Social Affairs under the leadership of Noel Laku Secretary of Youth, and Falabia Edward Secretary of Education and Social Affairs respectively.



CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT... YOUTH ONLY CONFERENCES (2018, AND 2019)

- In 2019 a Youth Conference was held in Des Moines, Iowa, July 5-6, 2019 organized by the Secretariat of Youth under the leadership of Noel Laku, under the theme, *Together we are Strong*. The conference by youth, mothers, and elders of the community.
- Jimmy Ociti, Chair of the Board of Directors was the guest speaker.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT... THE YEAR 2020 TO PRESENT

Addressing Youth Concerns Related to Sexual Abuse and Harassment within the Community:

- On July 5, 2020, female members of ESSCA-USA Executive and a select number of women from the community met to explore ways of how to address sexual abuse and harassment issues within the community raised by our youth on the ESSCA-USA WhatsApp forum.
- On July 26, 2020, a general assembly meeting was convened to tackle the sexual abuse and other related issues affecting our youth.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT... THE YEAR 2020 TO PRESENT

- On August 9, 2020, ESSCA-USA Officers met with the youth to brief them about the vision, mission and functions of ESSCA-USA. The youth shared their concerns and the meeting resolved following:
 - Formation of ESSCA-USA Engagement with Youth Committee” to be supervised by the Secretaries of Women and Education and Social Affairs .
 - Terms of Reference (ToR) were drafted and names of the volunteers sent to the BOD for approval. The ToR and BOD approval letter were shared with the general Assembly on September 5, 2020.
 - A WhatsApp group for the committee created on September 16, 2020.

CHRONOLOGY OF ESSCA-USA ENGAGEMENT, CONT...

THE YEAR 2020 TO PRESENT

- Members of the ESSCA-USA Engagement with Youth Committee include the following: Langalafa Oriho, Nyibon Garafan, Emmanuel Wani, Suzy Laila, Reta Kitara, and Noel Laku as Community Representative.
- This committee was reconstituted in February 2021, and Reta Kitara is appointed Secretary of Youth Affairs to oversee the planning of today's youth conference.

ESSCA-USA SECRETARIAT FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS OFFICE HOLDERS

Secretariat for Youth Affairs Office Holder 2014-2021

2014-2017

- Nelson Ungang, Secretary
- Agnes Silvestro, Assistant Secretary

2017-2019

- Noel Laku, Secretary

2019-2021

- Samiya Abu-Youm Secretary
- Samuel Lazaros, Assistant Secretary
- Reta Kitara, Acting Secretary (February 2021-Present)

OFFICE HOLDERS PRIOR TO 2014

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2003-2005

- Agnes Hassan, Secretary for Education and Women Affairs

2005-2007

- Rose Oduho, Secretary for Education, Youth and Women Affairs
- Micklina Kenyi Assistant Secretary for Education, Youth and Women Affairs

2007-2009

- Agnes Hilary, Secretary for Youth and Gender Affairs
- Sunday Abandio, Assistant Secretary for Youth and Gender Affairs

2009-2011

- There was no Secretary for Youth and Gender Affairs

2011-2014

- Dr. Jane Kani Edward, Secretary for Women and Youth Affairs

CONCLUSION

- ESSCA-USA is an organization for all Equatorians and can only thrive with the participation of the youth, adults, women, and men who are willing to volunteer and lead the organization.
- This must be based on mutual respect, support and appreciation of each other and the contribution made by each individual towards the organization and common good of the community.
- Only together can we successfully move the organization forward. Everyone should be a participant and work to change the organization for the better from within rather than tear it down or throw stones at the organization from outside.

SOURCES CITED

- Fourth Annual Equatorial Conference Report, September 4-5, 2004, pp. 1-45.
- ESSCA-USA Bylaws Amended in September 2017.
- ESCA-USA Women and Youth Workshop Report and Resolutions, Buffalo, New York, 2008, pp. 1-9.
- 13th ESSCA-USA Annual Conference Program, Lansing, Michigan, September 2013.
- The 16th ESSCA-USA Annual Conference Program, September 3rd – 4th, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2016.
- Diana Tombe, Jacob Idra, Walter Paul, and Jada Loro, “Compromise as One,” Power Point Presentation, 18th ESSCA-USA Annual Conference, Omaha, Nebraska, September 1, 2018.
- Youth Office Report, prepared by Noel Laku, 2019.

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THANK YOU

QUESTION & ANSWER

About ESSCA-USA - Summary

ABOUT ESSCA-USA

- ESSCA-USA is a non-profit organization.
- Article II, Section One of ESSCA-USA's articles of incorporation clearly stipulated that the "corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, and scientific purposes..." (page 1).
- It was originally founded as **Equatoria Family** in Missouri in 2000.
- In 2002 the Equatoria Family was renamed as Equatorian Sudanese Community Association –USA (ESCA-USA) during a conference held in Omaha, Nebraska.
- It was renamed again in 2012 as Equatorian South Sudanese Community Association–USA after South Sudan's independence in 2011.

ABOUT ESSC-USA, CONT...

Vision

- The vision of ESSCA-USA is a united, self-supported, and strong South Sudanese Equatorian Community in the United States.

Mission

- To empower Equatorian South Sudanese in the United States through community mobilization, advocacy, education, and promotion of self-help initiatives and cultural heritage.
- ESSCA-USA is incorporated in the State of Iowa in 2004, and has a federal non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c) (3) status.

ABOUT ESSCA-USA CONT...

Initial members of Board of Directors of ESSCA-USA (2004)

- Lawrence Becu Mogga,
- John Lado,
- Kaunda J. Mogga, and
- Scopas Kenyi Numbe.

ESSCA-USA Current & Former Office Holders

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Elected Presidents

Current President

- Dr. Jane Kani Edward (elected twice)

Former Presidents

- George Simon Oromo
- Martin Abucha
- Alfred Hakim Lado
- Edward Zowe
- Kwaje Lasu (elected twice)

Former Acting Presidents

- Vice President Ladu Gubek - completed George Oromo's term after his resignation.
- Vice President Micklina Peter - completed Alfred Lado's term after his resignation.
- Vice President Jane Abucha - completed Edward Zowe's term after his resignation.
- Secretary of Women & Youth Dr. Jane Kani Edward- completed Kwaje Lasu's term following his resignation.

ELECTED CHAIRS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Current Chair of the Board of Directors

- Jimmy Ociti Otira

Former Chairs, Board of Directors, (*source: Benaiah N. Duku*)

- Lawrence Becu Mogga
- Benaiah N. Duku
- Paulino Paida
- Seme Levi Anoka – he resigned and Oliver Tunda stepped in as Acting Chair.
- Jobickson Modi (two terms)