



JOINT MINDS INTERNATIONAL

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REBUTTAL TO AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED BY UPHOLD ICAN CORE VALUES BLOG AS IT RELATE TO JOINT MINDS INTERNATIONAL (JMI)

Our attention has been drawn to a publication currently going round on the internet and social media, especially within members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) where a campaign of calumny has been mounted against our Lead Doyen.

In the said publication, our noble Club, Joint Minds International (JMI) was mentioned as a group organized to “favour his electioneering gimmick”. This allusion revealed a lack of correct information or ignorance on the part of the publishers of the said article as nothing can be farther from the truth about our Club and Lead Doyen, Oluwatobi Abiola, FCTI, FCA. While we do not intend to join issues with the publishers, we are willing to provide clear information about our Club, JMI, its history, activities, organisation and leadership, so that the publishers can be better informed and members of ICAN may not be misled.

INTRODUCTION

Joint Minds Club was first organized at Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro in Ogun State of Nigeria in June 1990 by students of the Department of Accountancy. The club adopted a mandate of ACADEMIC, SOCIAL & PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE as its focus, ONE LOVE as its motto and FAMILY LINEAGE system as its administrative pivot. The Club is presently being organized in the Departments of Accountancy of 12 higher institutions in Nigeria where it takes in 23 final year students from each of these schools on a yearly basis. Upon graduation, student members are conferred with the status of Life Joint Minds (LJM) and are admitted into the membership of Joint Minds International (JMI).

ADMINISTRATION

Joint Minds International is a Club of many parts with multi-layer organisational structure and not a one-man show as being insinuated. The Club has its Board of Trustees duly registered with the CAC. This is the highest governing organ of the Club and is made up of top-notch professionals and equally successful members of the society who have at one time or the other been student members of the Club during their final year in their various institutions.

The JMI Council is the Executive organ of the Club that sees to its day-to-day administration. There are also other layers of administration for LJMs (Graduate members), JMs (Student members – HND/BSc) and JMAs (Joint Minds Ambassadors for final year ND student members).

GROWTH

Right from inception, JMI has maintained a foresight of a strategic player in academic, social and professional development of its members. This is reflected in all of its plans, policies and programmes.

In 1995, the Club celebrated its 5th year anniversary with a Professional Forum held at the Lagos City Hall where a Highly Revered ICAN Past President, Mr. Dolanimi Babafemi Olabamidele (D.B.O.) Ogutuga was decorated as the Club's Grand Patron.

The above event was chaired by the then ICAN President 1994/1995, Late Chief (Mrs) Olutoyin Olakunri FCA who was represented by the then Vice President and later President 1995/1996, Sir Simeon Oguntimehin FCA with ICAN President 1996/1997 Mr. Emmanuel Itoha Ijewere FCA as guest speaker on the topic – VAT: A Myth or Reality? The financial wizard, Chief Abiodun Ogunleye FCA, then Lagos State Commissioner for Finance was the Special Guest of Honour. Remember, VAT was introduced in 1993 and implementation of this tax type started in 1994.

Even as a young organisation in 1995, all these dignitaries were physically present at the JMI event. Furthermore, our association with quintessential professional, Past President Doyin Owolabi FCA also dates back to the early 2010s when he was our Special Guest of Honour at another JMI function in Abeokuta, Ogun State. Please note that Lead Doyen Tobi Abiola was not in Council nor had he nursed or thought about the idea of contesting ICAN Council election as at these times.

CLUB INITIATIVES

The Club has made its marks with numerous programmes and activities out of which the following can be easily identified as flagship, especially as they relate to ICAN and its members:

1. The Annual Finance Act seminar:

This is an annual event organized by the Club to review the nation's annual Finance Act. It was first organized in 2019 at Muson Centre with more than 2,000 professionals in attendance. The 2020 and 2021 editions were held on-line as webinars due to the Covid-19 gathering restriction. Plans are already on for the 2022 edition, again at the Muson Centre.

2. Happy Hour:

Joint Minds International has been the organizer and sponsor of Happy Hour at both the Annual Accountants Conference and Western Zonal conferences. This has added an interesting twist to social gatherings and interactions at ICAN conferences and has also become one of the marketing points for conferences.

3. JMI Academy:

This is the Club's vehicle for mentorship, training and scholarship for ICAN student members. More than two hundred (200) ICAN student members have gone through the JMI Academy and the Academy currently has ninety-one (91) students at various stages of the ICAN professional examinations being prepared for scholarship. The JMI academy has produced several ICAN prize winners amongst its fold at both the ATSWA and professional examinations.

4. JMI/TAISS (ICAN Scholarship Scheme):

JM Academy presents indigent ICAN student members with scholarship initiative at every diet of the professional examination of the Institute. This scholarship scheme, which covers both tuition and examination fees, is opened to both JMI members and non-members and cuts across all geo-political zones, tribes and religions. As at the last count, not less than 150 student members have benefitted from the scheme. For November 2022 diet, the scheme is providing scholarship for 37 students at a cost of N5.5m. Let us quickly state that the club is highly appreciative of well-meaning Nigerians and corporate Nigeria for associating and sponsoring this initiative.

5. Annual Symposia:

Employment & Mentoring Symposium for student members at all schools where we can be located.

TOBI ABIOLA SHOW

Lead Doyen Tobi Abiola, FCTI, FCA is today the Lead Doyen of Joint Minds International (JMI) which in popular parlance means the President and Head of the Club. He is Chairman of the JMI Council and a member of the Board of Trustees. These positions, he has earned by his believe, commitment, support and dedication to the tenets of the Club and through the confidence of our over 10,000 members both in Nigeria and in the diaspora.

Joint Minds International has membership spread beyond ICAN. Some are members of Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA), Certified Public Accountants (CPA), Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN), Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria (CITN), Chartered Institute of Bankers, Nigeria (CIBN), Chartered Institute of Stockbrokers, Nigeria (CIS) and all other professional bodies, eking out their living and making waves in many these professional bodies without being labelled as a group set up for political scheming.

The Club also has a Chartered Accountants (ICAN) group as well as a National Accountants (ANAN) group, where members belonging to these Professional Accounting Organisations (PAO) relate freely and share professional information. Joint Minds International, to the glory of God, has, directly or indirectly, produced well over two thousand, five hundred (2,500) chartered accountants of ICAN extraction who are well placed both in public and private sectors of the economy. One of its members is a Council Member of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, Nigeria (CITN) while another is her Deputy Registrar. One of the pioneer members of this club is the Nigerian Managing Partner of one of the biggest accounting firms in the world. We have produced top government leaders, both at State and Federal Government parastatals and establishments; captains of industry, business gurus and boardroom leaders, and lots of individuals resident in diaspora. We recently added to our profile the Rector of one of the Federal Polytechnics in the country and more are still coming.

The JMI initiative is lofty and should not be maligned as leaders have been produced by this enviable club. This initiative is a bigger and wider version of that birthed by another fellow of our great Institute, Dr. Adedeji Awobotu. His successful experiment with the Adrac Alumni, a body that brings professionals that had passed through the Adrac training the opportunity to network and socialise. Is this another bad initiative? in our opinion, no. We feel the more of these initiatives, the better for our Institute. Please don't let us disparage good things on the altar of politics.

We hereby state that in case anyone felt threatened by this noble club, then he/she can as well set up his/her own and use it as a political machinery. A word of advice however, is to know that an average Chartered Accountant is of sound and independent mind and not a zombie. In this club, we allow and encourage our members their choice of career the same way, we allow and encourage them to make their own political decisions, whether within or outside ICAN. However, we do not see it as a crime, if they decide to support their own in any election, and we owe no one any apology for that.

With this information being made available to the public, especially members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria, we wish to categorically state that the JMI which was established 32 years ago cannot be said to have been set up recently by one man for political purpose with an ICAN election in mind. Though the Club mentors, encourages, trains and sponsors its members, and even non-members alike to become Chartered Accountants, it cannot be said to have been set up for "electoral manipulation of ICAN systems to favour his electioneering gimmick" and JMI cannot be said to be one of the "groups he organized for that purpose". Lead Doyen Tobi Abiola FCA enjoys lots of goodwill due to his selfless nature and efforts. As it's popularly said, "luck is opportunity that had been prepared for." He had joined others in laying the foundation for this Club, with sweat and sacrifices, they have seen to its growth, if the initiative is now working in his favour, let those that sleep while others labour continue in their slumber.

In conclusion, we understand all the politics going on because he has followers and his re-election is around the corner. As a Yoruba adage goes, "ẹ má fi òtè ba ohun tó dára jé", meaning we should not out of envy destroy a good thing. Our Lead Doyen should be celebrated and not maligned.

Let us quickly state for the benefit of our Clubs teeming fans and friends that finishing touches are being put into the launch of our new Club initiative, Joint Minds Business Club (JMBC) which, God willing, should come on board next year. This initiative will allow those who subscribe to the tenets and focus of our noble Club to be admitted into our Business Club and through the wide network provided by the Club, contribute to and enhance their own Academic, Social and Professional development. JMI also state unequivocally, that we encourage anyone who wishes to know more about our Club to kindly visit our website: www.jointmindsinternational.com or contact any of the undersigned executive members for further, clearer and truthful information.

Thanks so much for taking time to read and digest the above listed points.

Yours in selfless service to humanity,



LJM Vincent Bamgbose, FCA
JMI Council Secretary.



LJM Kolawole Bisiriyu, FCA
Chairman, JMI
Chartered Accountants Forum.