

CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMAND JOS ALUMNI (COJOSA) OF NORTH AMERICA.

PREAMBLE

We, the alumni of Command Secondary School, Jos (CSSJ), located in Jos in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, now residing in North America (USA and Canada), have committed ourselves to form a non-profit organization called “COJOSA of North America”

We, members of the Association, do hereby commit ourselves to support and solemnly pledge to adhere to the tenets of this constitution.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of our organization shall be known as COJOSA of North America and members shall be known as “commandos”

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the association shall include, but not limited to the following:

- A. Shall be non-profit, non-political, charitable and voluntary organization
- B. Identify and organize alumni of CSSJ in the Americas and promote the welfare of its members
- C. Help to strengthen teaching and learning at our alma mater
- D. Support and collaborate in any viable projects and programs as may be initiated by the school’s administration, benevolent organizations, PTA, school board of governors and other chapters of COJOSA to salvage, sustain, uphold, promote and protect the image of our alma mater
- E. Promote any other activities that may be deemed necessary and appropriate in the interest of the association.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section I

Membership shall be open to all former students of Command Secondary School Jos (CSSJ) residing in North America, irrespective of the period of their candidature in CSSJ

Section II. Class of Membership

(a) Active member:

Is entitled to all rights and privileges and subject to all obligations membership confers. Such rights shall include eligibility to seek any office in the association (subject to being certified as qualified) and the right to vote.

(b) Member-at-large

A member who has relocated out of North America or because of ill-health or a legitimate reason is unable to attend or participate in regular meetings and activities and desires to retain membership and upon whom the executive committee desires to confer this status. Such a member shall not be eligible to hold any elective office. The Executive committee shall review this status every six (6) months.

(c) Associate member

Associate membership shall be extended to non-resident commandos and old students of other command secondary schools in Nigeria who may wish to identify with this association. The executive committee shall have the prerogative to confer this status. Associate members shall not be eligible to seek office in the association and shall have no voting rights.

Section III: Registration and Dues

(a) There shall be a registration fee of USD 25.00 for both active and associate members or as may be determined by the Executive committee and approved by the membership

(b) Annual dues for all classes of members shall be USD 100.00 (or as determined by the EC and approved by the membership.

(c) Dues shall be paid yearly and shall not be pro rated.

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

The association shall be administered by an elected, governing body known as the Executive Committee (EC) to be composed of;

- (a) President
- (b) Vice President
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Assistant Secretary
- (e) Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- (f) Regional Ambassadors

ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

(a) President

- (i) The president shall be visionary and shall be the chief executive officer of the association
- (ii) Preside over all general and executive meetings
- (iii) Protect and enforce the constitution and By-laws
- (iv) Work closely with the EC and the membership to achieve the goals and objectives of the association
- (v) Report annually to the membership on the state of the association

- (vi) Call emergency/ special meetings as needed
- (vii) Shall be the spokesperson and image maker for the association
- (viii) Shall appoint members into one or more committees.
- (ix) Perform other functions as may be required of the office

(b) Vice-President: shall

- (i) Perform the functions of the president in his/her absence
- (ii) Coordinates, collaborates and assists the president as and when necessary
- (iii) Performs other functions as may be assigned by the executive committee or the membership

(c) Secretary: shall

- (i) Coordinate all activities pertaining to meetings of the Association
- (ii) Notify all members of date, time and location of meetings or phone number, password access in the case of conference call or by any other electronic medium
- (iii) Record, maintain and distribute copies of minutes to all members in an ideal format and by acceptable medium
- (iv) Maintain the membership register, all relevant documents and correspondences between the association and other entities
- (v) Communicate all activities organized or sponsored by the association to all members and to the public .

(d) Assistant Secretary: Shall

- (i) Assist the Secretary in his/her duties
- (ii) Perform the full duties of the Secretary in his/her absence
- (iii) Shall be the website administrator for the association
- (iv) Shall act as the moderator of the association's electronic forum

(e) Chief Financial Officer (CFO): Shall

- (i) Be the treasurer of the association
- (ii) Maintain accurate records of all financial transactions
- (iii) Reconcile bank statements and current ledgers as needed
- (iv) Keep and safe guard association's checks and ATM cards
- (v) Compile and present annual financial reports of the association by end of financial year at the annual convention
- (vi) Ensures that the association meets all regulatory financial reports at end of each tax-year.

(f) Regional Ambassadors (RA):

- (i) There shall be five (5) ambassadors to represent, Canada, North Western, North Eastern, South Western and South Eastern USA
- (ii) They shall be responsible in monitoring and recruiting new members

ARTICLE VI: AUTHORITY AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

Section I: Authority: The EC shall have authority to

- (a) Keep in custody and maintenance of the Association's assets and finances.
- (b) Establish standing and temporary committees for the smooth running of the association
- (c) Have general control over all committees and officers. May override the decision or action of any officer and for good cause may declare any office vacant and appoint a member to fill any unexpired term thereof
- (d) Administer the association using the authority and powers vested under the constitution

Section II: Limitations

- (a) The EC shall not have any authority to spend or authorize any expenditure in excess of USD 5000.00 (five thousand dollars) without approval by the general membership at a regular or special meeting

ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS AND TENURE OF OFFICERS

Section 1: Elections of Officers

- (a) The EC shall appoint an ad-hoc electoral committee (COMMANDECO) consisting of three (3) non-executive members who shall have the responsibility of overseeing general elections
- (b) All executive officers shall be elected by the general membership
- (c) Elections shall be held every two (2) years during an annual convention
- (d) All elections shall be by secret ballot system
- (e) Voting by proxy shall be permitted
- (f) Eligible voters may mail their proxy votes to the electoral committee, at least two (2) weeks prior to an election.

Section II: Candidates for office

- (a) A candidate for any office shall be a member in good standing. At minimum, he/she must have paid all dues to date and have an attendance record of 60% or better at meetings
- (b) Only active members who completed their course of study at the school without being expelled shall be entitled to be presented for elections into the EC.
- (c) A candidate for election must have been an active member for at least one (1) financial year and a minimum of two (2) financial years for the post of President or the Secretary. For this purpose the financial period shall start 30th September and ends 29th September
- (d) An active member may seek an office or be nominated by another active member

Section III: Tenure of Officers

- (a) Elected officers shall be sworn in and assume authority during the closing ceremony of an annual convention
- (b) The term of office shall be two (2) years for a maximum of two consecutive terms
- (c) No executive member shall hold two (2) elective offices simultaneously
- (d) An executive officer may be re-elected to another office upon completion of two (2) consecutive terms.

Section IV: Removal of Executive officer

- (a) Any elected or appointed member of the EC may be removed from office by a simple majority vote at a general meeting
- (b) The following shall constitute offences or grounds for removal
 - (i) misappropriation or embezzlement of funds and /or other assets of the association
 - (ii) violation of the association's constitution and by-laws
 - (iii) publication or dissemination of any printed or electronic matter which misrepresents the association or brings its integrity into disrepute
 - (iv) use of privilege members' personal information for personal benefits or fraudulent purposes
 - (v) use of privilege position to seek an illicit relationship/affairs with any student of CSSJ
 - (vi) refusal to pay annual dues for a period of six (6) months or any special assessment or levy agreed by the membership
 - (vii) Consistent refusal to participate or absent in planned activities of the association without valid reasons.
- (c) Any active member in good standing, supported by at least any other four (4) members in good standing or by two (2) members of the EC, may request the removal of an officer through a written notice to the president and/or secretary at least two (2) weeks before a regular meeting of the EC
- (d) A designated ad-hoc committee appointed by the EC shall give any officer whose removal is deliberated a due hearing. The committee's findings and recommendations shall be presented to the EC for proper action at a general meeting

ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES

Section I: Regular General business meetings:

- (a) shall be held every three (3) months (on dates and by a medium to be determined by the general membership and set forth in the bye-laws
- (b) The annual convention shall be the final regular general meeting for the financial year. This shall be held in the month of October; on the date and in a city and location as may be determined by the membership

- (c) Emergency or special meetings may be convened by the president at any time, or upon the written request to him/her
- (d) One-third (1/3) of the members shall constitute a quorum for any meeting
- (e) All meetings shall be conducted in English language
- (f) All meetings other than the annual convention may be held by telephone conferencing, streaming video or by any other acceptable technology
- (g) In all meetings, decorum shall be observed and every member treated with mutual respect
- (h) During meetings especially by teleconferences, extraneous discussions shall be minimized or deferred to the end of the meetings
- (i) Notices for general meetings shall be disseminated by emails, text-messages, association's website and popular social networks (such as face book)
- (j) For documentation purposes; any member who envisages his/her absence from any meeting shall notify the secretary by writing via email or fax at least 24 hours before the commencement of the meeting otherwise will be counted as being absent (This shall not preclude the use of a voice phone call or text message for such notification)

Section II: Executive committee meetings

- (a) Three (3) members of the EC shall form a quorum with the president or any officer designated by the president in attendance
- (b) Regular business meetings of the EC shall be held every two (2) months through an appropriate acceptable technological medium
- (c) The president or his/her designated officer may at anytime, or upon the written request to him/her call special or emergency meeting of the committee. Such a call shall designate a date, time, medium and purpose

Section III: Committee meetings

- (a) Regular business meetings of committees shall hold no less than once every 2 months.
- (b) The presence in person of the chairperson or any member of the committee designated by the chairperson in writing (via email) and any two (2) other members of the committee shall form a quorum
- (c) The chairperson may at any time, or upon written request call a special or emergency meeting of the committee. Such a call shall designate a date, time and most acceptable method to such members and the purpose of the meeting

ARTICLE X: FINANCES

Section I: The association derives its operational income from

- (a) Membership registration fees of USD 25.00 and annual dues of USD 100.00 or as determined by the EC and approved by the membership
- (b) Annual dues shall be paid between January and March each year. Late payment shall attract a fine of 10 % and an interest of 10 % per year on the unpaid dues

- (c) Fund-raising, charitable contributions and other means deemed appropriate by the EC and approved by the membership may be made to meet administrative costs of the association and projects the association may embark on
- (d) Any member indebted to the association at time of vote or any time at which the question of good standing is raised, shall automatically forfeit the privileges to vote and/or be voted for by virtue therefore and be considered for all purposes as not in good standing so long as such debts remain unpaid

Section II: Controls and Accountability

- (a) The association shall operate and keep its funds in two (2) separate accounts; a project/charitable account and an operational/administrative account
- (b) The project/charitable account shall be strictly operated by checks only, while the operational/administrative account shall be operated by checks , ATM cards and other acceptable electronic processes
- (c) Withdrawals by checks from the association's bank accounts shall be done under the minimum of two signatories; the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and either the President or the Secretary in the absence of the president.
- (d) ATM withdrawals by the CFO shall be approved by the president in writing either by electronic or non-electronic medium
- (e) PIN numbers and passwords of ATM cards and internet banking shall be changed within ten (10) business days, when there are new signatories to the accounts
- (f) For the purpose of Federal Tax Returns, individual members shall be issued receipts/invoices with the seal of the association of their total annual charitable financial donations/contributions signed by both the CFO and Secretary
- (g) The personal information of members, such as date of birth, social security numbers, addresses, phone numbers and all account details shall be protected by all officers of the association having such privilege information in the course of their duties

Section III: Auditing of Accounts

- (a) The EC shall appoint an external auditor to audit the association's account at least once every year. The auditor must be a certified accountant and shall not be a member of the association
- (b) The auditor shall have unfettered access to all books and accounts of the association; shall examine the annual return and verify it with the accounts, vouchers, deeds, documents of title and securities for the whole year to which the annual return relates and shall either sign it as found by him/her to be correct, duly vouched and in accordance with the law or specially report to the membership in what respects he/she finds it incorrect, unvouched, or not in accordance with the law

ARTICLE XI: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section I: The president with the approval of the EC shall make appointment into the following standing committees

- Membership
- Finance
- Project
- National Convention/Reunion
- Mentoring
- Constitution/By-law

Section II: Membership Committee (MC)

- (a) Shall be responsible for recruiting new members, membership retention and executing membership services
- (b) All regional ambassadors of the association shall be members
- (c) A representative of each class set shall be a member.

Section III: Finance Committee (FC)

- (a) Shall ensure the development of the annual budget of the association. Review the financial status of the association on an on going basis
- (b) Develop a plan for fund-raising and other financial activities for the coming year
- (c) Make recommendation regarding the management and disposition of funds
- (d) The chairperson shall make a report at each EC meeting and shall convene a meeting of the committee prior to each EC meeting
- (e) Shall be composed of at least five (5) members. The CFO shall be a member. At least two (2) members shall be selected from the EC by the President. The President may appoint members from outside the EC

Section IV: Project Committee (PC)

- (a) Shall be responsible for the research, initiation and implementation of the associations projects, programs and activities
- (b) The president shall be a member of the committee
- (c) Shall be up to date with activities and projects been implemented by other branches of COJOSA world-wide

Section V: National Convention/Reunion Committee (NCRC)

- (a) Shall consist of as many members as the president considers necessary to assure a successful annual convention/reunion event
- (b) The duties of the NCRC shall be to make all arrangements for the annual convention. Shall be responsible for all logistics involved in organizing a successful convention/reunion including recommending appropriate theme, keynote speaker (s) and special guests to the EC for final approval

- (c) Shall include two members of the EC and other members selected by the president
- (d) The local organizing committee (LOC), comprising members from the hosting state, shall be constituted once the venue of the convention is determined and announced and shall work with the NCRC in laying the groundwork for convention including suggesting local hotels and tourist sites. Final decision on the official convention hotel shall be made solely by the EC

Section VI: Mentoring Committee (MC)

- (a) The MC shall seek and match interested CSSJ students with esteemed members or other non-resident commandos who are leaders and successful in their various professional fields and career
- (b) The committee shall help in providing information on career guidance, study and scholarship opportunities to CSSJ students.
- (c) Shall monitor and ensure the integrity of the mentoring programs

Section VII: Constitution/By-Law Committee (CBLW)

- (a) May initiate or receive from members proposals for changes in the constitution or By-Laws and shall make recommendations as provided for in the By-laws
- (b) Shall show an expert opinion when the question arises on the interpretation of this constitution

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

- (a) Any member or members can propose amendments to the constitution
- (b) All proposals for amendment must be submitted in writing to the CBLW at least three (3) months before the national annual convention
- (c) Any proposed amendment to this constitution shall be deliberated and voted upon by the general membership during the annual convention
- (d) The constitution shall only be amended by at least a two-third (2/3) vote of all active members of the association present at the annual convention

ARTICLE XIV: DISSOLUTION

- (a) This association shall exist perpetually unless dissolved according to law
- (b) Dissolution shall be approved by a two-third (2/3) majority vote of active members present at a special general meeting, summoned for this purpose
- (c) In the event of dissolution, there remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, shall not be distributed among members of COJOSA of North America, but shall be transferred to other organizations or institutions, having similar objects to those of COJOSA of North America and such institutions and organizations are prohibited from distributing same to their members to an extent the law imposed on COJOSA of North America

ARTICLE XV: PROHIBITED ACTS

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, this organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to carry on
 - (i) By organization exempt from Federal Income under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or
 - (ii) By a corporation contribution to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code
- (b) No substantial part of the organization shall carry on any propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation
- (c) This organization shall not participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office in North America