

**OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**



**30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN ACCOUNTANTS  
GNANA (AWAG @30)**

**ADDRESS BY:**

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**THUR. MARCH 14, 2024**

**COCONUT GROVE REGENCY HOTEL**

**Theme: 30 years of balancing. The way forward for the career woman in the 21st century**

**Slogan:** AWAG ....

**Response:** “*Balance*”

It is a delight to join you distinguished ladies in the accounting profession for the 30th anniversary launch of your Association. In the spirit of International Women’s Day which was observed on 8th March, I wish to commend you all for blazing the trail in this noble profession.

Though excited at the invitation, I asked your President why me and not any of your colleague accountants to address this gathering. She responded, “*we want a new face, a female who has distinguished herself in her field of endeavour and can inspire us*” and this resonated so much with me. I wish to express profound gratitude to the President and Executives of the Association for inviting me to this programme.

Reading about the Association of Women Accountants, Ghana (AWAG), I noted that it was formed to achieve the following objectives of:

1. Professional Development
2. Strategic Partnerships
3. Women Advocacy

Growing up, it was commonplace to see women usually performing secretarial roles and possibly some HR functions in corporate institutions. The Accounting Departments were usually dominated with males, and I believe the rationale the forebearers of this Association had, was to encourage many other women to venture into this space. 30 years down the lane, you have a lot to be proud of. Through this Association and what you have been able to accomplish, you have demonstrated time and again that gender is not a barrier to success, but rather a catalyst for innovation, creativity, and progress.

Globally, efforts are being made to increase the number of women playing important roles in various disciplines. In politics and governance, sports, corporate leadership, STEM, creative arts among others, deliberate efforts are being made to encourage women participation in decision making. I therefore see AWAG's

mission as directly aligned with the global vision for women empowerment.

30 years of an organization's existence is no mean feat and I salute all of you who have worked hard in various capacities to hold the Association together all these years. Anniversaries such as this provides the opportunity to reflect on your journey so far, to celebrate modest gains and strategize to make the Association more impactful.

I find the theme for the celebration spot on: **“30 years of balancing. The way forward for the career woman in the 21st century”**. It speaks directly to the experiences and aspirations of women navigating the dynamic world of the professional and personal life. The demands of your profession can often be all-encompassing, requiring a careful balance of the responsibilities of work with the complexities of family life.

It is an undeniable fact that as women, we juggle a lot of things, bearing and raising childing, care giving, being wives, mothers, daughters, corporate women etc. All of these are “full-time” jobs which we have to execute successfully. Unfortunately, because of the difficulty in achieving work-family life balance, some women have had to choose between their career and family lives. Some

have had to sacrifice opportunities for further studies to provide needed care as women, while others have lost spouses in their determination to succeed at the workplace. Though difficult, it is extremely important to create a harmonious balance to ensure a fulfilling life.

The act of balancing is not a static one. It involves a routine of determining priorities and making choices that produce optimum results and satisfaction in our quest to succeed both at home and in our chosen profession. It requires resilience, determination, and a willingness to recalibrate when necessary. Our ability to balance serves as a source of strength, enabling us to thrive in the face of adversity and to live purposefully.

In this dynamic and ever-evolving landscape, the role of women accountants has never been more crucial. As stewards of financial integrity and guardians of transparency, our contributions extend beyond the balance sheets and ledgers. We are architects of change, catalysts for innovation, and champions of diversity and inclusion. Our unique perspectives, experiences, and insights enrich corporate decision that impacts profitability and growth of our organizations.

So, how can women accountants excel in this era of unprecedented change and complexity? The answer lies in embracing our inherent strengths, leveraging cutting-edge technologies, fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous learning, and prioritizing our well-being and fulfillment. Let me quickly share with you five points to bear in mind in our quest to keep balancing as a career woman in the 21st century.

### 1. Overcome Systemic Barriers to Career Progression

As women, we encounter systemic barriers that continue to hinder our career progression. This may include stereotypes, biases, and other forms of discrimination at the workplace. We must therefore continue to advocate for inclusion and break the bias in order to succeed. Speak up, politely yet firmly when you and your colleagues encounter discrimination.

### 2. Harness the Power of Technology

We must harness the power of technology to enhance our capabilities and streamline processes to improve productivity. Digitalization and the digital revolution (i.e. artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics etc) presents unlimited opportunities for innovation and growth.

Embracing emerging technologies, enables us to enhance efficiency, improve decision-making, and unlock new possibilities for our clients and organizations. Never join the BBC wagon!

### 3. Embrace Continuous Learning and Professional Development

It is imperative to cultivate a culture of continuous learning and professional development. In a rapidly changing world, staying ahead of the curve is essential to remaining competitive and relevant. Whether through formal education, certifications, or networking opportunities, we must commit ourselves to lifelong learning and personal professional growth.

### 4. Work-Life Balance

As women, we often juggle multiple roles and responsibilities, both personally and professionally. We must therefore prioritize work-life balance and well-being. It's essential to care for ourselves, set boundaries, and seek support or help both at work and home when needed. By taking care of

ourselves, we can perform at our optimum and inspire others to do the same.

#### 5. Support Each Other

We need to hold each other's hands as we climb higher. Let us reaffirm our commitment to supporting and empowering one another as we navigate the opportunities and challenges of our profession. Together, we can build a future where every woman in the accountancy profession has the opportunity to thrive, succeed, and lead with confidence and purpose.

Before I take my seat, I want to urge you to continue your mentoring drive of "*Catching them Young*". Through this partnership with the secretariat of ICAG, many young people will be attracted into the accountancy profession and more importantly, encourage and support females to become Chartered Accountants.

Hearty congratulations to the Association of Women Accountants, Ghana for staying and championing this noble course for the past three decades.

I thank you for your attention

**Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo**



**Vice-Chancellor**

**(14th March 2024)**