



Short Interview with Bernice Oyeleke

Her Abilities Award Winner in Health and Education 2020

What achievement are you most proud of?

All my achievements have made me very proud. However, organising the first ever National Literary Competition for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions really made me very fulfilled. This is because the participants attested to the fact that it met with their yearning and presented them with a long-awaited opportunity. Their fulfilment made me fulfilled as well.

What's your message to women with disabilities?

Women with disabilities should always pursue the course of adding value to themselves because they really need it to get the respect that they deserve. They should keep striving hard to move forward. They should avoid stagnancy and depending on the opposite gender or the government to meet their needs. They should pursue value-adding activities such as attending workshops, seminars, conferences and have a viable career.

What is your vision for an inclusive society?

I envision an inclusive society where people with disabilities have equal opportunities to achieve on equal basis with other people without disabilities. A less restrictive environment that activates the potentials of people with disabilities. A society where all barriers are removed for persons with disabilities such that whatever a person with disability wants to achieve, like schooling, working etc, he/she can without restriction.

What are the barriers you have faced in your life and how did you overcome them?

I was faced with the barrier of getting adequate education after the onset of deafness at the age of 13, my determination, consistency and hard work paved way for breakthrough and outstanding achievement recorded.

What is your response to winning Her Abilities?

I am super-excited to have won the Her Abilities Award in Health and Education out of 124 entries from 48 countries all over the world. Thank you, Light of the World, for the unique opportunity. It is an encouragement for me to keep on contributing to the development of my society. It is a catalyst for more productivity.