

# UniPort Weekly

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## V-C Inaugurates Town Hall Meeting, Briefs Staff On State Of Varsity



In realization of his mission statement of instituting a Town Hall Meeting in which all stakeholders would contribute their quota to the development of the University, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Bale, addressed a cross-section of the University community on Friday, February 5, 2016, promising to make it a regular feature of his administration, reports *Obinna Nwodin*.

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## Side Bar

*Orientation Programme for First Year Student for the 2015/2016 session holds at the Convocation Arena, on Wednesday, February 17, 2016.*

*Details next week*

*~Editor*

# Akaranta Cautions Against Excess Salt Consumption At 2016 Founders' Day Lecture

*By Humphrey Ogu*

In view of the harmful effects of excessive salt intake on human health, Professor Onyewuchi Akaranta of the Department of Pure and Industrial Chemistry has called for caution in the consumption of sodium.

Delivering the 2016 Founders' Day Lecture of the University entitled: *Health is Wealth: Salt for Taste, Sodium for Healthy Living*, at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium on Wednesday, February 10, 2016, Professor Akaranta noted that "though sodium is needed for healthy living, excessive consumption of salt and processed foods leads to a build up of sodium in the blood stream that could be fatal."

Akaranta, who observed that the vast accumulation of sodium in the human diet emanated from processed foods, described such foods as typically high in salt and additives that contain sodium, listing bread, prepared meals, meat and bacon, egg dishes, cheese, soups and fast foods as some of such processed food that could endanger human health when not consumed in moderation.

On strategies for reducing salt intake,

Professor Akaranta, who is Director of the Science Institute, advised the public to eat more of fresh foods, opt for low-sodium products, remove salt from recipes whenever possible, limit the use of sodium-

laden condiments, use herbs, spices and other flavourings, calling for moderate use of salt substitutes which he said would result in retraining taste buds and reduce

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## Fighting Cancer Scourge In Nigeria

By Humphrey Ogu

To describe cancer as a killer disease, is to state the obvious—perhaps—a cruel understatement. The fact remains that cancer has been a long time human enemy which had brought incalculable sorrow to numerous homes by snatching vulnerable people from their loved ones. The cancer battleground is the entire human body, irrespective of geographic location, religion, race, colour, economic status, age or gender. Cancer can, therefore, be rightly described as the number one health scare and public enemy of all classes—both high and low without let or hindrance. To defeat this common foe that has so far defied all remedial measures requires deliberate concerted effort at all levels of the decision-making process. This, perhaps, explains the theme of World Cancer Day 2016, which is: *We Can. I Can.* It calls for individual and collective effort of all stakeholders towards reducing the global burden of cancer.

While some experts believe that cancer cases are on the rise, others are of the view that there is now a better diagnosis of the disease with cutting-edge medical equipment. In the past, superstition was at the centre of the rising cases of cancer, as some faith-based organisations encouraged those afflicted to believe that ghosts, ancestral curses or unstated 'enemies' were responsible for cancer. Today, the story appears to be changing as victims of cancer are increasingly seeking proper clinical care, although late presentation remains a big problem in the battle for early detection of the scourge.

In recognition of cancer as a global scourge and the need to sensitise the public about the danger the disease poses to society. February 4 every year was set aside as World Cancer Day (WCD). This is with a view to raising awareness on ways of preventing the killer disease.

Here in the University of Port Harcourt, Director of the Health Services Department, Dr.



Dr. Ezirim, Ag. Director

Chinwe Ezirim, noted that the aim of WCD is “to create awareness and spread the information that the fight against the global cancer scourge has to be tackled at the community and individual levels.

“The Health Services Department wishes to re-emphasise that research has revealed that most cancers can be prevented if detected early. The major factors that determine whether one can achieve this feat or not are diet, lifestyle and environment,” she said, adding that “a summary of the simple steps to prevent cancer naturally form a compelling acronym—NEW START. This stands for Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunlight, Toxic Relief, Air, Rest, and Thankfulness.

“We sincerely hope that before the end of this leap year, we would receive empowerment from Management of the University to organise

seminars to address the prevention and management of some specific common cancers such as prostate cancer, breast and cervical cancer, lung cancer, liver cancer and cancer of the kidneys,” Ezirim added.

In his message on the World Cancer Day 2016, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon said: “We must do more to end the many tragedies that cancer inflicts. About one third of cancers can be prevented, while others are curable if diagnosed and treated early. And even when cancer is advanced, patients should still benefit from palliative care.

“Cancer affects all countries, but those with fewer resources are hit hardest. Nothing illustrates this better than the burden of cervical cancer. The world’s poorest countries are home to more than 8 in 10 women newly diagnosed with cervical cancer, and 9 in 10 deaths from the disease,” he observed.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) on its website observed that “Each year on 4 February, WHO and International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) supports the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to promote ways to ease the global burden of cancer.”

Describing Cancer as the uncontrolled growth and spread of cells, WHO explains that “it can affect almost any part of the body,” adding that “many cancers can be prevented by avoiding exposure to common risk factors such as tobacco smoke. In addition, a significant proportion of cancers can be cured by surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy if they are detected early.”

As explained above, cancer is an “omnivorous disease”, it attacks people without discrimination, meaning that people should closely monitor their health status to know when something is going wrong. This calls for concerted efforts from corporate groups and individuals. The 2016 World Cancer Day is, therefore, a clarion call to action against the growing cancer scourge. Early detection is known to be a critical step towards surviving the onset of cancer, while lifestyle and diet are critical to the prevention of the scourge.



Mrs. Iyagba

## Congregation Elects Iyagba Into Council

By Otikor Samuel

Deputy Registrar in charge of Admissions, Mrs. Flora Iyagba, has been elected as a Representative of the Non-Teaching Staff to complete the tenure of the former occupant, Mrs. Dorcas Otto, who assumed office as the 7<sup>th</sup> Registrar of the University last month.

Mrs. Iyagba, polled a total of 389 to emerge winner of the election which was monitored by our Correspondent at an Emergency Meeting of Congregation held last Thursday at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium. She was followed by former Bursar, Mr. Mark Roman, who scored 141 votes, while Dr. Fidelis Jahka, placed a distant third position with a total of 48 votes.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, who announced the results to an ecstatic audience, further disclosed that the total votes cast stood at 578. He declared the election as valid and urged all Congregation members, including the contestants to accept the poll result.

In his opening remarks, Professor Lale, who earlier read the *Act* establishing the

University as it affects qualification for membership of Congregation, defined the body as consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Principal Officers, full-time academic staff and all other administrative staff, including every senior staff with a recognised University degree, disclosed that the three candidates for the election were duly nominated and seconded by eligible members of Congregation.

He said the processes were thoroughly supervised by the Registrar, Mrs. Otto and other registry staff nominated for that purpose.

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# Akaranta On Excess Salt Consumption

dependence on salt which he said only improves taste.

He noted that the human body needed sodium to function properly because it usually helped to maintain the right balance of fluids in the body, explaining that "the kidney naturally balances the amount of sodium stored in the body for optimal health. When the body sodium is low, the kidney essentially holds onto the sodium. When the body sodium is high, the kidney excretes the excess in urine. But if for some reasons the kidney cannot eliminate enough sodium, sodium starts to build up."

He said that magnesium can play a role in helping to regulate the balance of potassium, sodium and other electrolytes in the body, adding that "obtaining enough magnesium to improve cell sodium—potassium balance may be as simple as adding more fruits and vegetables to our diet. Fruits and vegetables are often rich in both magnesium and potassium. "Increasing the intake of magnesium and potassium may help expel excess sodium from the body, and lower the blood pressure as a result. A simple rule to follow in improving the body sodium—potassium balance is to eat more fresh and frozen foods while avoiding canned food," he advised the audience.

"Potassium is an essential nutrient that regulates water balance in the body, thus controlling the amount of fluids that the body retains or excretes. It also contributes to metabolism and other biochemical reactions, maintains electrolyte balance and boosts the functioning of the nervous system," he said, adding that "potassium deficiency results to body weakness, lethargy, loss of appetite and muscle cramps. Therefore, potassium should be a necessary component of diet."

Akaranta, who is Occupant of the Donald Ekong Professorial Chair of Oil Chemistry and Science Communication, noted that potassium-rich foods could help remedy any deficiency, listing banana, white beans, avocados, baked potatoes as some of

such foods that should be consumed, appealing for support from the University Management to enable the Chair function effectively.

Speaking after the Lecture, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, recalled that the University of Port Harcourt was established on February 6, 1975, expressing delight that it had done a lot in the area of quality research and manpower development in the arts, science and technology in the last forty years.

He expressed gratitude to Professor Akaranta for accepting to deliver the Lecture at very short notice, which he described as a multidisciplinary exercise aimed at sensitising the University community on such an important issue as their health status in the era of mass consumption.



V-C, Prof Lale (arrowed) flanked on the right by the Registrar Mrs. Dorcas Otto, Profs Alagoa and Prof Akaranta, DV-C (Admin) Prof Ibe and 7<sup>th</sup> V-C, Prof Joseph Ajiinka, other Professors and Senior Officers of the University

*It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives*  
-MELLO DEATH NOTE

"I have come to know that it (death) is an important thing in mind—not to complain or to make melancholy, but simply because only with the honest knowledge that one day, I will die, I can ever truly begin to live." These were the touching words of R. A. Salvatore that lend credence to the fact that death is an inevitable end that would come when it must come, according to William Shakespeare. One sure thing that man bears in mind is that all of humankind is mere mortal on this inscrutable stage of life, playing their part and exiting when their part is done. Just in an inexplicable moment of existential cruelty, the actor takes his bow and leaves the stage.



Late Mr. Nsiegbe

## Tribute To Sunny Nsiegbe

By Obinna Nwodin

This is the frailty of life; it is the reality of our existence here. Indeed, Late Mr. Sunny Onyemauche Nsiegbe has acted his part on the stage of life and bowed out gracefully and we are now left to reflect on the beautiful memories of the part he played on planet earth.

For family members, colleagues, friends and well-wishers, Sunny's transition was a painful exit as they converged in large numbers to pay their last respect to a true gentleman and hard working staff. The heavy attendance was a demonstration of the fact that Mr. Nsiegbe made significant impact in the 56 years he spent on earth. In the words of Marcus Tallius Cicero, "the life of the dead is placed in the memory of the living." Glowing tributes from his colleagues showed that Sunny was indeed a fine gentleman who gave a good account of himself at work, home and even the Deeper Life Bible Church, where he deployed his musical talents and exhibited his deep spiritual nature.

In a tribute in honour of Late Mr. Nsiegbe, Registrar of the University, Mrs. Dorcas Otto, stated that while in the services of the University, Mr. Nsiegbe was known for his simplicity, humility, hard work, selfless service and above all, the fear of God. These were some of the qualities that made him a unique person and an exemplary staff. The Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities, (SSANU) through its Branch Chairman, Mr. Bikume Syder, described Mr. Nsiegbe as an epitome of hard work and excellence, stressing that during his days at the School of Graduate Studies and Academic Office, Nsiegbe remembered nothing else until the business of Senate was being completed. To Mr. Promise Simeon, his successor as Personnel Officer (Academic), all who knew Mr. Nsiegbe would easily attest to his impeccable character, noting that he was

not surprised that the toga of gentleman defined the way he walked, talked and went about his official assignments. Indeed, so much would be said about Mr. Nsiegbe's life of dedication, commitment and devotion to whatever he laid his hand to do. This was also attested to by other staff of the Personnel Office (Academic), where he served as Personnel Officer until his sudden demise. They tearfully described their late boss as a humble, disciplined hard working staff and administrator *par excellence*.

Late Mr. Nsiegbe did not only preach hard work, he practised it to the hilt. This was why after joining the services of the University of Port Harcourt in 1983 as Typist Grade II, he rose through the ranks by dint of hard work and perseverance to the position of Principal Assistant Registrar. He served in various capacities and Departments of the University, including the Academic Planning Unit, Academic Office, as well as Personnel Office (Academic), which incidentally was his last port of call. Nsiegbe was evidently ready to give much more before the cold hand of death snatched him from us!

Sunday, November 8, 2015 was the appointed day when Late Mr. Sunny Onyemauche Nsiegbe completed his task on the stage of life and took a glorious bow. According to Albert Pike, "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." How true in the case of Mr. Nsiegbe? The giant footprints he left behind challenge all of us to learn from his exemplary life. What is left is for those of us still playing our part to also remember that the greatest honour we can do to our departed colleague is to strive to ensure that we are finally remembered by the good things we have done as the psalmist declares in a celestial hymn that mocks at our vanity. We hope to see Mr. Sunny Onyemauche Nsiegbe on the resurrection day. Sleep on brother. Rest on, our dear colleague.



# Geology Dept Hosts Visiting AAPG Geologist

By Mercy Adeniji

As part of efforts aimed at exposing students to industry practices that are relevant to their field of study, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), in collaboration with the Department of Geology, Faculty of Science, organized a lecture session with students of the Department on Friday, February 5, 2016, at the Geology Laboratory, Ofirima Building, University Park.

Delivering a lecture entitled: *Oil and Gas Exploration: From Play to Volumetrics*, the Visiting Guest Lecturer and staff of Shell Petroleum Development Company, Mr. Chima Chikezie, disclosed that: "The whole essence of the lecture is to ascertain how a Geologist in the Oil and Gas industry works, such that he goes to a new field and is able to describe the place in details and declares authoritatively that there would be oil and gas accumulation in such a place. What does he need to do to give that kind of steer"? He described the process as essentially what students should know about the important discipline that is central to hydrocarbon exploration and mining.

The principles of Geology, according to Mr. Chikezie, are basically what the students were supposed to be learning at their current level of academic inquiry, explaining that AAPG was very interested in teaching students how to apply the principles of mining and exploration which they should take with them long after leaving the University.

"I currently work as an Exploration Geologist with the Shell Petroleum Development Company, here in Nigeria and I am a member of AAPG and a Volunteer Visiting Geologist. What this Volunteer Visiting Geologist programme is about is to get people, who are in the industry, most importantly, those in the oil and gas sector to go to universities to explain some Petroleum Geosciences courses to the students. So I am here on one of such assignments and I hope that my mission would be beneficial to students of UniPort," Mr.



Geology student at the lecture

Chikezie said.

He recalled that: "In November, 2015, I was at the University of Calabar to do exactly the same thing. The whole idea is to provide students with knowledge and practical understanding of what they are learning in the university and how such classroom theories can be applied in the industry to solve problems in the field. It is also a sort of motivation for the students, such that if they see people who have done similar programmes and are doing well, they would know that what they are learning would be useful to them on graduation."

Mr. Chikezie, who is an alumnus of the Department, said he would always be excited to return to the University, even as he appealed to students to take their studies seriously. "Many of us made serious mistakes as students, but we were able to go back on track and are doing great in our chosen career lines today, but some could not and are nowhere today. So as a student, don't think that what you are learning now is just theory and a waste of time. Every practical study is underpinned by theoretical background; so whatever decision you may make tomorrow is underpinned by the theory you are

learning today," he told the students.

In his contribution, Head of Department, Professor Godwin Udom, disclosed that the programme was organized by AAPG as a way of bringing students close to what happens in the industry, expressing hope that the interaction would expose them to current developments in Geology practice. "As you can see, Mr. Chikezie was a student in the Department like you, but today, he has made his mark and brought honour to his *Alma Mater*; even going on to work with SPDC and represent AAPG in Nigeria. That is a spectacular feat that our students should emulate," the HoD told the students.

Also speaking, Faculty Officer, Dr. Nduka Egesi, expressed gratitude to the Visiting Geologist for motivating Graduate and Final Year Students to pursue careers in the specialization, hoping that the students would receive updates that would prepare them to join a highly competitive industry.

Highlight of the lecture was presentation of certificate of participation to the Guest Lecturer, hands-on exercise and a question and answer session.

In pursuit of the terms of an existing Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Port Harcourt and Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA), the two institutions have agreed to establish a Committee to coordinate the activities of the University's Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES).

The two parties have also restated their willingness to explore the possibility of initiating a training programme in Agriculture at the Songhai Farm that would lead to the award of the Diploma in Agriculture to successful candidates by the Senate of the University.

These were some of the major highlights of an interactive session between top functionaries of the Agency and a delegation from the University led by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale.

Receiving the Vice-Chancellor, the Manager in charge of Interface and Project Integration, Mr. Tekena Lawson, showered praises on the Vice-Chancellor for what he described as his many contributions to the growth of the Agency.

Mr. Lawson, who welcomed the four-member delegation at the Agency's headquarters at Asarama Street in Port Harcourt on Friday, January 29, 2016, on behalf of the Acting Executive Director, Mr. Larry Pepple, described Professor Lale as a consummate agriculturist, who played a major role in the formative years of RSSDA.

"Professor Lale made many things happen as a member of the Implementation Committee and we cannot thank him enough for his insight. Our close association with him gave us better focus and we are comfortable working with the

## UniPort, RSSDA To Establish SIWES Coordination C'ttee

By Williams Wodi

University of Port Harcourt because of the cordial institutional relationship we forged with him in those early days," Mr. Lawson recalled.

Stressing the need for the establishment of a body to be known as UniPort-SIWES Coordinating Committee, he disclosed that the Committee would be charged with responsibility for proper field operation of the University's Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme. "We are also exploring the possibility of commencing Short-term courses in Agricultural and Skills Acquisition Schemes that would lead to the award of the Ordinary National Diploma by the University," Mr. Lawson disclosed, pointing out further that RSSDA was considering the award of agricultural scholarships to suitably qualified candidates that would be obtainable in UniPort.

Elaborating further on the operations of the Agency, Mr. Lawson disclosed that the vision behind the establishment of Songhai Farm was for it to provide opportunity to farmers and fisher folks in the State to increase their yield and begin to enjoy farming as a profitable venture that would attract young people. "We are also working towards the possibility of taking the Agency away from government interference and bringing it under private sector leadership. "The training component of Songhai Farm initiative is critical to all the stakeholders, because it would

enable us build capacity for farmers in the State and beyond. We want young graduates to begin to appreciate the beauty of agriculture and also to establish themselves as 'agropreneurs' and to achieve this goal, a post-training progression plan is necessary," the Manager said.

In his contribution, Professor Lale expressed gratitude to the Management of RSSDA for recognizing his modest contributions to its initial take off, stating that "graduates of agriculture want to be on their own with some hands-on training. What graduates of agriculture need now is an incubation entrepreneurship programme that they can tap into to grow their skills on the job. They also need grants or loans that would operate under strict mentorship programmes."

The Vice-Chancellor promised that the University would continue to send its fourth year students to Songhai Farm to obtain the requisite hands-on skills that would enable them become successful farmers on graduation. "We will continue to explore areas of further partnership with RSSDA that would enable us train students of agriculture in this country. I still believe that we didn't have to send our Undergraduates abroad just for them to obtain what is available at home. If we must send students abroad, then let us limit the number to Postgraduate students alone to save critically needed foreign exchange that should be put to other uses," Professor Lale said.

He advised the Management of RSSDA to enter into agreements with integration farms in the country and also work towards securing its independence from political bureaucracy to guarantee its sustainability in the long run, assuring the Agency that the University had the requisite expertise and capacity to train personnel that would enhance the operational efficiency of RSSDA. "Ministry personnel should be technically sound to enable them add value to their job description and we have the capacity to train them," the Vice-Chancellor assured the Agency.

On the Vice-Chancellor's entourage were the Registrar, Mrs. Dorcas Otto, Deputy Registrar (Information), Williams Wodi and Special Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, Mr. Kingsley Wogwu.

Also on the RSSDA team were the Manager, Strategy and Planning, Mr. Nemi Ogbanga, Manager, Farm development, Charles Nwonuala, General Manager in charge of Human Resource Development, Mr. Godwin Poi and General Manager in charge of Agro-Allied Services Division, Mr. Biedima Oliver.



V-C, Prof Lale (arrowed) Registrar, Mrs. Otto (right), DR (Information) Wodi far right, SAV-C, Mr. Wogwu far left and Officials of RSSDA



LINDA DEBO (PETROCHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY)

I am very happy to be one of the Inductees today; because it is the day I have been looking forward to since I gained admission into the University. As you can see, I am very happy it finally came to an end on a successful note. During the programme, we faced many challenges, but I give thanks to God that we were able to scale through the many hurdles to claim our prize today.



My advice to younger academic colleagues is that in a University environment like UniPort, they would see a lot of things that can distract them; but the best they can do as students is to stay focused on the main reason they are in the University and not let anything distract them from their main goal. There will be so much moments of pleasure in the future, but this moment is for serious academic work.

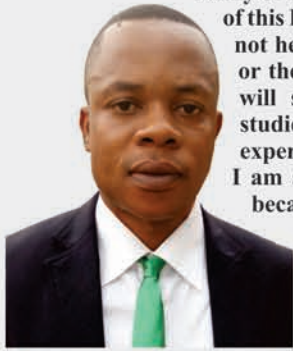
To my parents, I say thank you, I am proud of them for seeing me through school and I am glad I did not disappoint them.

DAVID WAGWU (BIOMEDICAL TECHNOLOGY)

This is one of my most memorable days, although it was very challenging, but I thank God for the opportunity to be amongst those inducted today.

Many of my friends wished to be part of this Induction Ceremony, but are not here due to one form of delay or the other. I pray that they too will successfully complete their studies and experience what we experienced today.

I am also grateful to my parents because they were my strength and backbone during this programme. I appreciate their effort, because they stood by me till I graduated. I can't find the



## SSLT Inductees Relive Experience As Students

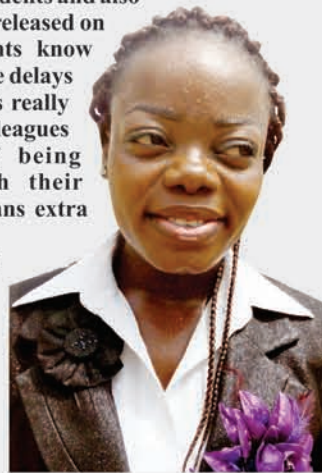
After five years of rigorous Field Trips, Continuous Assessments and Seminars, a total of 728 new technologists trained by the University of Port Harcourt were inducted into the profession by the Nigerian Institute of Science Laboratory Technology (NISLT) on Tuesday, February 2, 2016. The memorable event was part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Oath Taking/Induction Ceremony of the 2013/2014 graduands held at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium. Our Correspondent, MERCY ADENIJI spoke with some of the new Inductees. Please read on:

appropriate words to convey my heartfelt gratitude to them and all others who made valuable contributions to my graduation today. May God reward all of them, including my teachers.

EUNICE UKALA (MICROBIOLOGY TECHNOLOGY)

My experience in these five years was quiet challenging; I did not enjoy my stay initially because we felt humiliated and left out, as if we are not part of the school system, especially when other students came to chase us from the classrooms. I am glad we made it this far. I would like to appeal to Management to assist us in building more classroom blocks to accommodate SSLT students and also ensure that results are released on time to enable students know how they stand, because delays in the release of results really denied many of our colleagues the opportunity of being inducted today with their mates, which now means extra year.

Again, being inducted today made me see a different picture of what I am, because what the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale told us made me see myself differently; he said that Technologists are highly appreciated in Nigeria, so I am grateful to God



that I am a Technologist. I am appealing to my younger academic colleagues to work hard and remain focused.

THANKGOD ELEMELU (GEOLOGY AND MINING TECHNOLOGY)

We are all happy to be inducted today, which is a wonderful development in my career progression and personal life. So, I congratulate all my fellow Inductees for scaling through the high academic hurdle placed on our way by the Senate of UniPort. It is now left for us to go out there and prove ourselves as worthy ambassadors of the SSLT programme and this University.

I am grateful to God for being part of those who received the International Certification of the National Registry of Environmental Professionals (NREP), U.S.A. During the programme, I read and made sure I come out with good grades. I am glad my hard work has finally paid off. My advice to those we are leaving behind, especially our colleagues who did not make it is: "Be strong and do not give up. God is on your side. They should work hard and put in their very best; above all, they should put everything they do in the hands of God and he will surely perfect it for them."



## UniPort SSANU Resumes Work, As Union Suspends Nationwide Strike

By Otikor Samuel

Chairman of the University of Port Harcourt Branch of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Mr. Bikume Syder, has briefed members on the state of affairs of the Union, specifically with regards to the industrial action declared by the National body of the Association last December.

The nation-wide strike was called to protest the Federal Government's decision to discontinue funding for Demonstration Primary Schools in all Federal universities as a cost-saving measure. Government had argued that it had no hand in the establishment of such schools by university Managements, directing institutions that may still wish to run Demonstration Primary and Secondary Schools to fund them from their Internally Generated Revenues (IGRs). The current position of Government may not be unconnected with the dwindling revenue returns from the sale of crude oil in the international market.

In response to the policy directive which SSANU viewed as sudden and draconian, the Union directed its members in Federal Universities to withdraw their services as a means of exerting pressure on Government to rescind the decision to no avail. The strike action which commenced on December 24, 2015, was finally suspended on February 5, 2016, following a consultative forum convened by the National Executive of SSANU to evaluate the impact of the strike action. The various Branches of the Union were, thereafter, mandated by the National Secretariat to table a proposal to suspend the strike action before their local Congresses.

On Friday, February 5, the Congress of the UniPort Branch of SSANU unanimously agreed to join its counterparts in other universities to suspend the strike action, thus, paving way for the resumption of normal administrative, Technical and Secretarial activities last Monday.

Exchanging views on the latest development with our Correspondent last Wednesday, the UniPort Branch Chairman of the Union, Mr. Syder, praised his members for complying fully with the directive of the National Secretariat on the strike, describing the level of compliance as quite encouraging. "There was a high degree of cooperation from our members and I urge them to continue with such level of compliance so that we can collectively continue to safeguard the welfare of our colleagues," he added.

The Chairman disclosed that the Association suspended the strike to enable it seek interpretation from the

National Industrial Court on a contentious section of the Agreement it signed with the Federal Government in 2009, revealing further that agencies of Government such as the Federal Ministries of Education, Labour and Employment, National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission and National Universities Commission, were serving as conciliators to resolve the knotty issues that led to the strike action.

He, however, disclosed the possibility of the Union returning to the trenches to protest the impending sack of staff of University Primary Schools if the intervention of the relevant agencies failed to yield the desired objective at the end of the ongoing consultative process.

"University staff schools are established as part and parcel of the universities aimed at providing staff and people from the catchment areas of each institution an opportunity to give their children quality education that may not be available elsewhere. Such Demonstration Schools also serve as laboratories to the affected Faculties of Education for purposes of training and exposing students to teaching practice and providing some form of welfare scheme for staff of these universities," Mr. Syder said, regretting that such opportunities would be lost with the Government's new policy directive.

In another development, a former scribe of the UniPort Branch of the Union, Dr. Ekanem Ekanem, has been re-elected National Internal Auditor of the Association for the next four years. The election held at the 1<sup>st</sup> Quadrennial National Delegates' Conference held between November 23 and 28, 2015 at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State.

In a letter dated December, 2015, and addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, Principal Assistant General Secretary of SSANU, Mr. G.O. Wogu, thanked the Management of UniPort for its cooperation with SSANU members.

"We wish to seek your cooperation and understanding in releasing Dr. Ekanem as the occasion may demand to enable him discharge his responsibilities to the SSANU."



Mr. Syder



*Cont'd from p1*

The event which held at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium was attended by all categories of staff, including non-degree holders, who got a rare opportunity to be part of a novel University-wide consultative forum.

In his opening remarks, the Vice-Chancellor told the gathering that the Town Hall Meeting was part of his administration's policy thrust aimed at getting valuable input from every shade of opinion on how the University was being governed, describing the initiative as part of the pledge at his Inaugural Address. The policy, according to Professor Ale, was aimed at building a strong democratic culture that would engender free flow of ideas in the decision-making process.

Explaining why salaries were not paid promptly for the month of January, the Vice-Chancellor said that the shortfall in remittances from the Federal Government in December 2015 and January 2016 necessitated involvement of the various Unions in seeking ways out of the dilemma. According to him, following a meeting with the Unions, the Non-teaching staff associations comprising Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), National Association of Academic Technologists (NAAT) and the Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU), under the umbrella of Joint Action Committee (JAC) and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), took separate positions on the modalities for disbursement of January salary. Based on the divergent views, Professor Ale, told the gathering, Management was consequently compelled to bring the issue to the Town Hall Meeting for wider consultations.

Briefing staff on the state of affairs of the University, the Vice-Chancellor informed them of the emergent challenges faced by the administration in the provision of uninterrupted power supply as a result of the high cost of electricity generation by a company known as TOTAL SUPPORT, pointing out that money meant for other important uses were being channeled into funding the Independent Power Plant (IPP) project. According to him, the reality on ground today was that it would no longer be possible to provide 24 hours uninterrupted electricity supply to the community due to paucity of funds, adding that Management would have to determine how many hours of power supply that can be paid for under the circumstance.

## V-C Inaugurates Town Hall Meeting, Addresses Staff On State Of Varsity



*A cross-section of the audience at the meeting*

Professor Ale, who also advised staff to ensure that due process was followed in their official transactions, frowned at an untenable situation in which some staff embarked upon renovation of their official quarters, offices or made purchases before seeking official approval and claiming refund, warning that Management would not honour such unauthorized expenditures.

The event which featured a presentation on the Health Insurance Scheme by the Regional Manager of Health Care International, Dr. Njideka Njoku, as well as another

presentation on Improving Access Control through the Gate Tally Administration by the Chief Security Officer, Lt Col. Reginald Isiguzo (rtd), was interactive with contributions from staff present, seeking clarifications on the two presentations.

It would be recalled that the Town Hall Meeting is part of a 9-point mission statement, comprising 66 goals marshaled out by Professor Ale in his Inaugural Address as 8<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chancellor of the University on Monday, July 13, 2015.

## MLS Briefs Mgt On Proposed Med Lab Dept

*By Ethel Timi-Johnson*

The University of Port Harcourt Chapter of the Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists (MLS) met with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Ale and some Principal Officers, last Tuesday, with a long shopping list that included a proposal for the establishment of a new Department of Medical Laboratory Science in the University.

Speaking during the courtesy visit, Assistant Director and Head of MLS in UniPort, Mr. Claudius Ogolo, who led a 13-member delegation to the Committee Room, explained that the multiplier effect of the proposed Department on the University cannot be overemphasized, disclosing that all was set for the smooth take-off of the proposed programme in the University. He urged Senate to ignore muted opposition to the programme and accelerate action on the approval of the Department to bring it in line with what obtained elsewhere, especially in the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Nkpulu, where he said the programme had been run with roughly the same teaching

personnel on ground in UniPort.

"The Institution already runs courses in Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy, and it would, therefore, not be out of place to have a Medical Laboratory Science programme alongside to complement and strengthen these existing disciplines in UniPort," Ogolo stated, also appealing for promotion and improved welfare conditions for Medical Laboratory Scientists in the University.

In his response, the Vice-Chancellor described MLS as a critical area of study, given its role in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, promising that his administration would work towards the establishment of the proposed Department in the University after all the due processes were completed in order not to run foul of the standards prescribed by relevant regulatory agencies. "This meeting is an eye-opener for me and it is a reminder that the University of Port Harcourt lacks such an important discipline as Medical Laboratory Science. Let us sort out whatever needs to be sorted out to get the Department operational as soon as possible. But as I said, you must do your home work very well by ensuring that everything

that would be needed in terms of personnel mix would be put in place before you present your case. I shall await full documentation on your proposal and you can be rest assured that we will do the right thing when the time comes for us to act," he assured the delegation.

Professor Ale also assured members of the Association of his commitment to improving staff welfare and working conditions for the growth of Medical Laboratory Science, and overall development of the University. "It is my belief that professionals should be given an opportunity to grow and expand their practice without being at each others' throat as we have witnessed in this country. Medical practice was not made for only one set of professionals and there is absolutely no need for all the fractious relationships that have characterized the activities of the various groups in the past. We will do all that is within our powers to ensure that your Association and the University move forward in the interest of everybody," Professor Ale told the delegates.

The meeting also had in attendance, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors in charge of Administration and Academic, Professors Anthony Ibe and Igbo Joe, Registrar, Mrs. Dorcas Otto and the University Librarian, Dr. Susan Umeozor, Deputy Registrar (Information), Williams Wodi and Special Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, Kingsley Wogwu.

Medical Laboratory Science Association also had the following on its delegation.

While members of the Association include Ledee Augustine-D' Israel, Martins Ayodele, Sokari Newton, Chinedu Nworgu, Faith Amadi, Benjamin Dappa and Dr. Austin Abah amongst others.



*V-C, Prof Ale (centre front row), Principal Officers and officials of MLS UniPort*



## GUIDEPOST

## APPOINTMENT

**Professor Grace Awi-Waadu**, Department of Animal and Environmental Biology, Faculty of Sciences, re-appointed *Dean*, School of Science Laboratory Technology. The re-appointment is for two years, effective March 29, 2016 to March 28, 2018.

**Dr. Ugochukwu Kamalu**, Department of Electronics and Computer Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, appointed *Associate Dean of Faculty*. The appointment which takes immediate effect is for two years, effective February 2, 2016 to February 1, 2018.

**Dr. Dennis Eme**, Department of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, appointed *Coordinator of Department*. The appointment which takes immediate effect is for one year, effective February 1, 2016 to February 1, 2017.

**Dr. Olayinka Olusanya**, Health Services Department, appointed *Coordinator, Youth Friendly Centre*. The appointment which takes immediate effect is for two years, effective January 29, 2016 to January 28, 2018.

## RENEWAL OF APPOINTMENT

**Professor Cyril Usifoh**, Department of Pharmaceutics and Medical Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, granted a one-year *Renewal of Appointment as Adjunct Professor*, effective February 28, 2016 to February 27, 2017.

**Professor Godwin Chukwu**, Department of Petroleum and Gas Engineering Faculty of Engineering granted a one-year *Renewal of Appointment as Visiting Professor*, effective May 16, 2016 to May 12, 2017.

## SABBATICAL LEAVE

**Professor Lucky Akaruese**, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities, granted a one year *Sabbatical Leave*, to Delta State University, Abraka, effective March 1, 2016 to February 28, 2017.

## STUDY LEAVE

**Mr. Ekene Ogbodo**, Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Science, granted a 3-year *Study Leave with Pay* to enable him undertake a Ph.D degree Programme in Gastroenterology (Microbiology and Immunology Option) at the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, effective October 26, 2015 to October 26, 2018.

**Mr. Charles Oseghale**, Department of Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, granted a one year *Study Leave with Pay* to enable him complete his programme at University of Sheffield, effective January 15, 2016 to January 14, 2017.

**Mr. Ifeanyichukwu Edeh**, Department of Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, granted a one year *Study Leave with Pay* to enable him complete his programme at University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, effective October 1, 2015 to September 3, 2016.

V-C Reassures *Inside Eleme* Newspaper Of Support

By Obinna Nwodin

**I**t was a reunion of sorts last Thursday, when the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, played host to the Editorial and Management teams of a publication known as *Inside Eleme*.

He used the occasion to reiterate his continued resolve to contribute to the development of both Eleme and the larger Nigerian society in the position he was privileged to hold. Professor Lale gave the assurance when the Editorial and Management teams of the newspaper paid him a courtesy visit at the Vice-Chancellor's Committee Room.

The Vice-Chancellor stated that the greatest asset at his disposal was his intellectual capacity, which he had always deployed for the good of society, assuring his guests of his resolve to continue contributing his quota to the development of society.

Professor Lale, who assured the group of his continued support for their effort to achieve their stated objectives, advised them to seek knowledge that would

enable them make landmark contributions to Eleme Kingdom and the rest of society. "Today, the world is based on knowledge and the efforts deployed to acquire higher education at the graduate level would put beneficiaries in a better position of becoming gainfully employed," he said.

Earlier in his address, Editor of the newspaper, Mr. Promise Ikarine, who expressed gratitude to Professor Lale for the support given the publication over the years, also commended him on his commitment in the development of the University since he assumed office, urging him to keep up the good work. Mr. Ikarine also informed the Vice-Chancellor of the forthcoming Annual Public Lecture of the newspaper, revealing that Professor Lale was selected as one of the three recipients of the newspaper's Award of Excellence to be conferred on him at the event.

Also speaking, a member of the team, Mr. Njuma Egbe, assured the Vice-Chancellor of the continued support of the organization in realizing the vision of his administration.



V-C, Prof Lale (arrowed) flanked to his right by Mr. Ikarine and left by Registrar, Mrs. Dorcas Otto, other Principal Officers of the University and members of the Editorial Team of *Inside Eleme* Newspaper

## STOP PRESS

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## TWO MORE NON-NIGERIAN STUDENTS ENROL AT INRES

**D**irector, Institute of Natural Resources, Environment and Sustainable Development (INRES), Professor Enuvie Akpokodje had disclosed that two citizens of other African Countries under the DTCA-NTCF grant have arrived in the University of Port Harcourt. The students are among those admitted for the M.Sc Degree Programme in INRES for the 2015/2016 Session. They are; Aruna Jobe, a male from Gambia and Fiona Uwamahoro, a female from Rwanda.



## Lale Clocks 60

**V**ice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, clocked 60 years on Sunday, January 31, 2016. The milestone event was attended by dignitaries from all walks of life. The event which took place at the expansive Vice-Chancellor's Lodge at Delta Park featured the reading of a brief Citation on the celebrant, Exhortation by Venerable Saturday Nbete and cutting of a birthday Cake. Vice-Chancellors from other universities, Captains of Industry, members of the academia, friends, well-wishers and associates converged at the Lodge to wish the Vice-Chancellor many more returns at the auspicious occasion. Speaker after speaker heaped encomiums on Professor Lale, who expressed gratitude to his guests, including the Committee of Friends headed by Dr. Gift Worlu. A special thanksgiving had earlier been done at Our Saviour's Chapel, Interdenominational, Protestant Chaplaincy, University of Port Harcourt. Highlights of the event were captured by **JARULE** Photographers:



V-C, Prof Ndowa Lale, his wife, Joy and other well-wishers going for Thanksgiving at the Church



Prof Lale displaying his portrait, while some members of his immediate family and Prof Onyee Nwankpa (left) watch with admiration



Pioneer Dean, Faculty of Law and R/S Commissioner of Education, Prof Kaniye Ebeku, his wife Charity and other guests at the Church Service



The Celebrant and his wife stepping into the reception venue



Emeritus Prof Samuel Okiwelu (centre), the celebrant and his wife



Prof Lale exchanging pleasantries with 6th V-C, Prof Don Baridam, while DV-C (Admin), Prof Anthony Ibe watches



7th V-C, Prof Joseph Ajenka, his wife, Mercy (2nd and 3rd left) and Prof Lale



A cross section of guests



A dance troupe from the Dept of Theatre and Film Studies performing



Chief celebrant (in red cap), supported by his wife and admirers about to cut the cake



Time to clink the glasses



V-C, his wife and some Principal Officers on the dance floor



V-C and student leaders pose for a group photograph with his portrait