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Mechatronics Dept Ready For NUC Resource Verification

Ahead of the anticipated visit of a team from the National Universities Commission to the emergent Department of Mechatronic Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering for Resource Verification of the new programme, Acting Head, Dr. Tobinson Briggs, has restated the readiness of the Department to host the team, reports *Otikor Samuel*.

More on p3

Side Bar 5th Pharmaceutical Sciences Induction

Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences holds its 5th Induction and Oath-Taking Ceremony at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium next Friday, January 27, 2017.

Time is 9:00a.m

~Editor

Barely a week after the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowaale, led other Principal Officers and Management staff on an unscheduled inspection visit of on-going hostel renovation work, he similarly embarked upon another inspection tour of the same project sites.

Speaking during the latest round of inspection which took place last Wednesday, a visibly-elated Professorale expressed delight at the increased pace of work on the hostels and compliance to standards by most contractors handling the various projects. He urged them to conform to the agreed deadline of January 21, 2016 for completion and final handover of the jobs to the University, preparatory to the return of students for the new academic session.

"We cannot afford to leave the hostel renovation work without all the facilities adequately in place as time is of essence to us. So, we need a firm commitment from all the contractors to deliver on the due date as promised," he stressed, reminding them that those who fail to keep to the deadline would be blacklisted from doing business with the University in future.

Expressing worry that the level of maintenance of the hostels would determine the durability of the structures, the Vice-Chancellor emphasised that students in each hostel

Again, V-C Inspects Hostel Renovation Work

By Ethel Timi-Johnson

would need to exhibit some degree of responsibility by ensuring that facilities renovated at great cost would not be vandalised. "It may be needful to resurrect the old concept of electing Hall Leaders who would serve as middlemen

between the Hall Wardens and the students as part of effort aimed at enforcing the maintenance culture," he said. Professorale also stressed the need for students to imbibe the culture of responsible unionism through dialogue

More on p6



Idemiyor Talks Global Health

Story on p2



Estate Unit To Create Asset Register

Story on p3



QAQC Unit Tasks Provost, Deans On Time-Table

Story on p4



V-C Pledges Support For Ergonomics Society

Story on p5



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Idemyor Talks Global Health

If you are searching for a Clinical Pharmacist with informed opinion on global health issues, Professor Vincent Idemyor is your sure bet. In this interview, he submits that globalization is increasingly necessitating a holistic approach to health matters across national boundaries. He spoke to Editor, WILLIAMS WODI.

In a globalised world, national boundaries pale into insignificance as what affects one country tends to resonate across the global community. Globalisation has brought people together in space-time continuum and those who operate in silos are programmed to lose out on the fast-moving train.

Take healthcare for instance; nations that previously managed their health problems behind closed doors, are now compelled to open their boundaries to what is going on in other nations to conform to global best practice. Professor Vincent Idemyor captured this emergent scenario in an interview he granted *UniPort Weekly* last Monday: "In the global village, health concerns in one country cause panic in other countries because infectious and non-infectious diseases do not respect national boundaries or status.

"For instance, Non-Communicable Diseases affect people of all classes, ages, status and colours. Almost all the key players in the world—including Governments and Non-Governmental Agencies—have a role to play in the realisation of global health protocols, not just professionals in the health sector. Now that climate change has become a key component of the global health system, we need to be fully abreast of latest trends in this critical sector," Professor Idemyor told our Correspondent.

Disclosing plans to deliver a public lecture on global health issues to the University community, Professor Idemyor said that the concept was hinged on a holistic approach to addressing the disease burden that afflicts peoples across the globe. "Global health is different from international and public health issues. While international health focuses attention on the flow of assistance from privileged nations to resource-poor

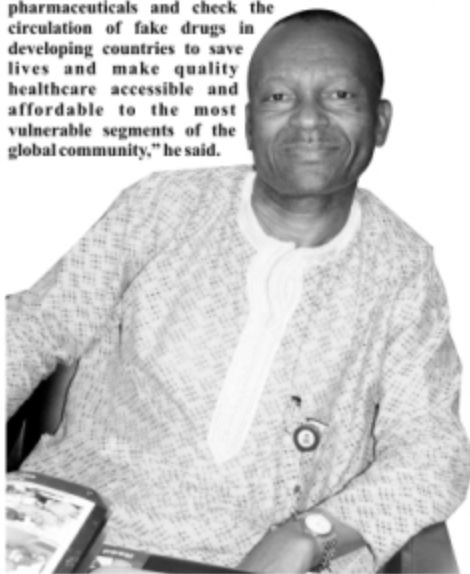
countries, public health is concerned with disease prevention. On the other hand, global health takes a comprehensive view of health problems around the world and attempts to devise ways of addressing them to benefit the vulnerable one in dire need around the world," he said.

"The prevalent health issues in sub-Saharan Africa include malaria, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and childhood diarrheal diseases that cause so much mortality in Africa. Others are Non-Communicable Diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. There are also deaths from motor vehicle accidents that are worsened by the absence of effective trauma facilities and requisite manpower to handle them. Nigeria with 12 to 17 vehicles per 1000 persons still records more road accident-related deaths than the United States with 868 vehicles per thousand persons," Professor Idemyor revealed.

He further disclosed that Asia and Latin America, along with the Caribbean Basin were next to Africa in high mortality rates arising from poor healthcare delivery system. "It is obvious that quality health professionals and institutional capacity are not enough in those areas and would need to be strengthened for effective healthcare delivery. The World Health Organisation's standard for effective healthcare delivery is one doctor to 413 citizens, but most countries cannot meet this number for reasons that are well known. Only Cuba and Israel got close to WHO's recommendation in terms of patient-doctor ratio. Even the United States is behind these two countries; worst still, in Nigeria, the ratio is one doctor to three thousand patients," he disclosed.

Professor Idemyor also spoke on the impact of the devastated environment on healthcare delivery which, he said, necessitated the inclusion of climate change on the

global healthcare agenda. He identified fake drugs and high cost of pharmaceuticals as a contributory factor to the rising health burden in developing countries. "This is where global health governance protocols would play a critical role in helping to moderate the high cost of pharmaceuticals and check the circulation of fake drugs in developing countries to save lives and make quality healthcare accessible and affordable to the most vulnerable segments of the global community," he said.



Prof Idemyor

Student World

Unlike most students who commence their career from the classroom to the field, Ishmael David began his sojourn into Environmental Studies from the field at the age of 20 before venturing into the classroom. "Immediately after my secondary education, my sister encouraged me to start tutelage under a foremost Environmental Consultant, Dr. Ini Ubong of the Institute of Pollution Studies, Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUST).

"During that period, I had the opportunity of working as a field assistant to Universities of Ibadan, Port Harcourt and other notable environmental experts. My goal then was to acquire skills in environmental studies rather



David

David Focuses Attention On Air Quality Around Petrol Stations

Ishmael David is a Master of Science student in the Department of Geography and Environmental Management with deep passion for environmental management. He spoke with Correspondent, HUMPHREY OGU, on his research interest and experience in his chosen field.

than the penchant to make money," he recalled, adding that his interest in Environmental Studies was borne out of his exposure and experience in the field, collecting environmental samples for senior researchers in the academia.

When the time came for university education, David went to RSUST to obtain a degree in Chemistry with bias for Environmental Chemistry. He, thereafter, enrolled into the Postgraduate Diploma programme in the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Port Harcourt. Currently on an MSc programme in the same Department, David is working on an intriguing topic: *Air Quality Study of Selected Petrol Stations in Port Harcourt City*.

On what he intends to achieve with his research, David said: "At the end of the research, I hope to bring to limelight, the major pollutant around petrol stations and to study the effects of the observed pollutants on motorists, workers in petrol stations and other residents around them," pointing out that the study will be beneficial to experts in environmental health and safety, including policy-makers.

On possible challenges in carrying out the research, David said: "Getting filling station managers to allow me to take air samples will be a major challenge, because it entails using portable equipment that would appear like a bomb to a layman, especially in view of the security situation in the country right now. This challenge can be tackled by sensitising and persuading the station managers to cooperate with me on the research effort. There might be serious logistic challenge if relevant petroleum workers decide to go on strike at the time of carrying out the research. This is because there might be scarcity of petroleum products, which will not only make movement too expensive, but also hamper taking of samples as not much activities will go on at petrol stations.

"I chose UniPort because of the title of the course. In

RSUST and Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, the course is studied under the MPhil in Environmental Management, UniPort runs it as Geography and Environmental Management, and Geography is the mother of science. Again, UniPort is a federal university with highly qualified and experienced lecturers that can train upcoming environmental managers like me," he disclosed.

"Coming to UniPort had deepened my knowledge. Theoretical knowledge is like an open system; it complements my practical skills, which I would like to a closed system. My classroom experience has enhanced my appreciation of my field experience," he added.

On his career prospect, David said that in 10 years' time, he hoped to have obtained a PhD and began lecturing to pass on the knowledge and experience to younger scholars, in addition to specialising in Environmental Impact Assessment, Post-Impact Assessment, Environmental Auditing and General Environmental Studies. "I also hope to run a successful Environmental Management firm," he added.

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Cont'd from Page 1

Speaking in a chat with our Correspondent in his office last Wednesday, the Acting Head of Department disclosed that apart from the need to purchase some new equipment to bolster the discipline, all other requirements as stipulated by the NUC for the running of the programme were already in place, preparatory to the eagerly-awaited exercise.

"We are expecting the NUC team for the Resource Verification of our programme in the first quarter of this year. Already, we have made our submission on the issue to the NUC through the Academic Planning and Control Unit of the University. I can assure you that the basic things required of us for the exercise are firmly in place. All we need to do now is to acquire some new equipment to add to the ones on ground and then embark on renovation of our building to enhance its aesthetic appeal in time for the arrival of the team. The last time we presented our programme for external evaluation was about three years ago, when we commenced the programme," the Acting HoD revealed, expressing satisfaction that the Department would scale the hurdle.

Dr. Briggs described Mechatronic Engineering as a relatively new specialisation in Nigeria that has multiple applications, disclosing that even Lecturers were properly evaluated to ascertain their level of preparedness to handle the subject that is already making great strides in Western Europe and Asia. "Mechatronic Engineering is

Mechatronics Dept Ready For NUC Resource Verification

tough because it is a new field that combines three disciplines; namely: Mechanical, Electronics and Communication Engineering. Mechanical devices are controlled with electronic or artificial intelligence and linked to Information and Communication Technology in its application.

"It is the combination of the sub-disciplines listed above that makes the subject difficult and that is the reason we went ahead to allocate courses shortly after the Second Semester examinations of the last academic session. The idea was to allow our Lecturers enough time to prepare very well before we convened the Academic Board Meeting to evaluate their level of preparedness for the 2016/2017 academic session. It should be noted that our course content is totally in line with the NUC Benchmark which we strictly followed, and even improved upon in our curriculum design," the Acting HoD told our Correspondent.

Dr. Briggs further disclosed that a partnership proposal with some industry partners was ongoing to train high-level manpower in Mechatronic technology, expressing optimism that when finally achieved, the anticipated

partnership would assist the undergraduate students in their workshop and practical laboratory exercises.



Dr. Briggs

Worried by the paucity of a reliable Data Base on all landed property owned by the University, the Estate Unit has concluded plans to create an Asset Register for easy access by



Jack-Osimiri

"In a normal situation, there should be records that people can refer to in respect of University landed property anywhere in the world. The proposed exercise is designed to fill that yawning gap in the system and bring our records up to date in line with what obtains elsewhere. We have already commenced work to document the capital, insurance, acquisition, compensation, rentals and ratings, including property management, development and agency," the Estate head told our Correspondent in an interview.

He disclosed that the Unit had already written preliminary valuation reports on properties at the University, Delta and Choba Parks,

report would include photographs and other relevant documentations that would lead to the development of an authentic Asset Register for the University, Mr. Jack-Osimiri explained, adding that the documentation would, thereafter be made available to Principal Officers and other stakeholders that may be interested in the asset base of the University for official purposes.

"Any person who wishes to know the state, number, type and location of the University's landed property can go on the Internet to have easy access to them for official dealings. With such properly written and pictorial evidence, the University can additionally solicit credit facilities from lending agencies such as the World Bank as the University of Lagos recently did with such important documentation. Again, such a documentation could also attract the attention of public-spirited individuals and organisations that may wish to partner the University in property development," the Estate head said.

On the modalities for implementing the project, Mr. Jack-Osimiri disclosed that the Schedule Officers from the Estate Unit would embark on extensive inspection visits to take measurements, constructional details and photographs, including enumerations, market surveys, assessment and computations for each hereditament on location to location basis with a view to determining the capital, insurance, rating and rental values of each facility with the aim of fixing the appropriate premium payable annually to insurance firms on each property.

Mr. Jack-Osimiri appealed to heads of the locations to be valued to be ready with title documents of the landed property and other relevant documents for ease of reference, adding that a final report would be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor at the end of March, 2017.

Estate Unit To Create Asset Register For UniPort

By Williams Wodi

stakeholders in line with global best practice. Head of Estate Unit, Mr. Chima Jack-Osimiri, who made the disclosure in a proposal to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, expressed displeasure that nothing has so far been documented in the areas of surveying, valuation and title deeds.

including those at the College of Continuing Education at Nkpulu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, the Port Harcourt Business School. Others are the University's Liaison Offices in Lagos and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. In the comprehensive exercise that we are proposing to the administration, the valuation

Staff Speak On Plans For 2017

Following resumption from work after the Christmas and New Year Holidays, Correspondent, ETHEL TIMI-JOHNSON, spoke with some staff on their work plans and hopes for a fulfilling 2017.



Prof Mmom

Director of the Centre for Disaster Risk and Management Studies (CDRMS), Professor Prince Mmom, told our Correspondent that the Centre has proposed two major programmes in the New Year. The first is to mount a Capacity-Building Workshop for staff and students of the Centre and host the second edition of the Conference on Disaster Risks Resilience.

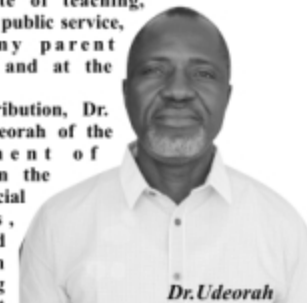
"Last year, we focused on flood as a natural form of hazard that is capable of metamorphosing into a major disaster; this year, the focus is to bring stakeholders on a common platform to chart ways to build resilience to the imminent flash flood disaster that continues to loom in the Niger Delta region. This year, we shall strive to veer away from natural to human-induced hazard. We are preparing inhabitants of the region for an imminent disaster in the volatile oil and gas industry which manifests in massive gas flaring and oil spillage," he stated, adding that the Centre would interface with the International Oil Companies (IOCs) operating in the region to brainstorm on ways of reducing such disaster risks that are associated with oil and gas exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta.



Mr. Thompson

He reassured stakeholders that the Centre would join its counterparts from across the world to celebrate the International Day of Disaster Risks Reduction and World Environment Day as ways of creating awareness about the environment. The activities would also highlight the dire consequences of actions and inactions of humans on the environment, including laying emphasis on safety issues. Professor Mmom said: "As the new academic session begins, I am ready to resume my core mandate of teaching, research and public service, both in my parent Department and at the Centre."

In his contribution, Dr. Sylvester Udeorah of the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Social Sciences, expressed hope that an enabling environment would be provided by the University Management to unleash the full potentials of staff and students in the New Year. "I would want to give my best as always, and also hoping that the right environment would be provided by Management to enable me put in my best. I want to encourage staff to key into the plan of administration. I wish to advise that we play our roles to our students in terms of treating these young ones entrusted into our care as our children so that they can fulfil the purpose for which they came to the University. We need to show them the right leadership so that they do not derail. I pledge to dedicate myself to playing my own part as a dependable guardian, parent and role model to the students," Dr. Udeorah said.



Dr. Udeorah

On his part, Faculty Officer in charge of the Faculty of Management Sciences, Mr. Simon Thompson, stressed the need to adhere strictly to the University Calendar to avoid omissions and errors that may arise from juggling

up so many activities at the same time. "Fortunately, the University Calendar has given us a clear guideline on University activities and it should be strictly followed. Right now, our Faculty is already working on students' registration and we hope to tidy up this schedule in time for the commencement of full academic activities in the new session," he said.

Mrs. Moira Woko of the Centre for Logistics and Transport Studies (CELTRAS), described the year as one of total commitment and dedication to work, despite lamenting that she did not receive the normal Christmas package last December. He expressed optimism that more students would be admitted into the Centre this year to enable it achieve its mandate of training experts in transport and logistics.



Mrs. Woko

Also weighing in, Senior Assistant Registrar in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Dr. Caroline Nnabuo, described the New Year as a fantastic opportunity for staff and students to strive towards achieving another successful milestone in the University. "I consider it a rare privilege to work in this University which has exposed me to a career path. Above everything else, my administrative and professional career progression is most paramount to me as a staff of the University. As a Registry Staff, I will ensure that I carry out my job description in a professional manner.



Dr. Nnabuo

This year, my ambition is to perform my duty in an effective and efficient manner in my little corner of the University without waiting to be reminded to do my job. I hope that other staff can make the same pledge to help the University grow.

Preparatory to the commencement of academic activities for the First Semester of the 2016/2017 academic session, the Quality Assurance and Quality Control Unit has appealed to the Provost, Deans and Heads of Department to ensure that all Faculty and Departmental Time-Tables and Course Allocation for the First Semester are released on or before January 16, 2017.

A statement dated January 10, 2017 and signed by the Director, Professor Ikechukwu Agbagwa, cited relevant sections of the general Regulations and Statement of Academic Policies (2016), stating that copies of such Time-Table and Course Allocation Forms should be submitted to the Quality Assurance and Quality Control Unit before 4:00pm on Wednesday, January 18, 2017.

The letter further requested each Department to submit a Departmental Time-Table and Course Allocation specific to it. "The Time-Table should indicate courses borrowed from other Departments and Faculties, if any. Faculty Time-Table containing courses for all Departments in a Faculty would not be acceptable. Each course

QAQC Unit Tasks Provost, Deans On Time-Table, Course Allocation

By Mercy Adeniji

should have a minimum of two lecturers allocated to teach it. This position was reaffirmed at the 358th Meeting of the Committee of Provost and Deans; thus, no course should be taught by one lecturer beginning from this Semester," the statement read. The Director added that courses that have different streams should be indicated clearly, specifying the names of lecturers to teach each stream. The statement also urged the Provost, Deans and Heads of Department to be guided strictly by Section 14 of the General Regulations and Statement of Academic Policies (2016) on Teaching.



Prof Agbagwa



Dr. Ironkwe

Ironkwe Unveils Plans To Lift Accounting Dept

By Mercy Adeniji

Department to the next level of development.

Exchanging views on his developmental blueprint with a *UniPort Weekly* Correspondent last Monday, Dr. Ironkwe recalled that he assumed office on November 21, 2016 with a pledge to chart a new course for the Department. "One of the core goals of the Accounting Department is to teach and carry out quality research with a clear mandate to superintend over the activities of the Department in respect of academic and administrative

roles and cater to the academic interest of our students.

"The academic aspect of our mandate is to promote research and teaching, while the administrative component is to ensure that the Accounting Department performs excellently in all administrative spheres," Dr. Ironkwe explained.

The Acting HoD said: "In pursuance of this goal, we have fully prepared our timetable and course allocation for consideration and approval by the Academic Board of the Department in line with best operational practice. We are working hard to get everything ready, preparatory to when students would return to the Campus to resume academic activities as approved by the Senate of our University."

Dr. Ironkwe disclosed that under his watch as Acting HoD, the quality of service delivery to the students and other stakeholders would be enhanced at different levels through effective monitoring processes to ensure that lecturers are physically present in class to teach students in line with the new way of doing things in the University.

"I also plan to install a *Complaint Box* as a feedback mechanism that would enable me monitor service delivery by staff to students and other stakeholders in the affairs of the Department," the Acting HoD said. He enjoined staff of the Department to be upright in delivering quality services to the students, who he described as the main stakeholders in the teaching and learning processes.

Dr. Ironkwe also advised the students to take their studies seriously by not allowing mundane issues to distract them from their main purpose of coming to the University. He also advised them to be disciplined so as to be found worthy in character and learning at the end of their stay in the University. Dr. Ironkwe expressed gratitude to Management of the University for giving him the opportunity to serve as Acting HoD, pledging to do his best to justify the confidence reposed in him by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale and Management of the University.

Barely two months into his tenure as Acting Head of the Department of Accounting in the Faculty of Management Sciences, Dr. Uwaoma Ironkwe, has disclosed plans to design a workplan that would take the

In recognition of their critical role in the training of specialised manpower to boost the productive capacity of the national economy in general and the University in particular, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, has reiterated support for professional bodies to enable them continue to contribute their quota to national development.

Professor Lale, restated his commitment when President of the Ergonomics Society of Nigeria, Engineer Samson Adaramola, led other members of the Society on a courtesy visit to the Vice-Chancellor last Thursday at the Committee Room.

"The University is elated to welcome another professional body and I am optimistic that this is one Society that should not find it difficult to recruit more members into its fold, due to its openness to experts in diverse fields," the Vice-Chancellor said, advising the leadership of the Society to create more awareness around its programmes and open up membership to experts from other fields.

Professor Lale also used the opportunity to further clarify issues surrounding the recent expulsion of 23 students, who he described as infinitesimal 'bad eggs' that needed to be separated from over 30,000 well-behaved students of the University.

"You must have heard that we recently expelled 23 students who constituted themselves into nuisance on Campus? The University of Port Harcourt is one of the finest universities in the country and we are student-friendly. Expulsion is always the last option in the process of disciplining students found culpable in acts of gross misconduct. The Senate of the University expelled those 23 students for very good reasons and that was after we had exhausted all due processes. We have close to 30,000 students in this University and it is in the interest of the majority that we get rid of the few bad eggs among them that are hell-bent on polluting the system. We must protect the University community against terrorists and hardened criminal elements that are bent on denting our image. We will not allow them to do so in this University," the Vice-Chancellor told the visiting team, reminding them that the Federal University of Technology, Minna in Niger State recently

V-C Pledges Support For Ergonomics Society, Explains Students' Expulsion

By Otikor Samuel

expelled as many as 700 students, while the University of Lagos expelled over 100. Professor Lale wondered why the expulsion of 23 students, who variously admitted to the charges preferred against them would generate tension in the University of Port Harcourt. He condemned the activities of some staff who covertly or overtly sponsor and encourage a few misguided students to threaten law and order on Campus with the hope of profiting from the ensuing crisis.

Earlier in his speech, Engineer Adaramola had explained that the Ergonomics Society of Nigeria was borne out of the desire to invest more time on the quintessential aspect of human asset which is critical to the development of other sectors, adding that partnering the University would assist in raising more awareness on the activities of the Society.

"ESN is Nigeria's only professional body that promotes the understanding of the role of humans in the design, manufacture, use of machine systems through the interchange of knowledge and methodology in the behavioural, biological and physical sciences. Consequently, it provides a forum for the exchange of multidisciplinary ideas and information about people, their work environment and their ways of life," the President disclosed, stating that the Society which was

inaugurated in the country on September 14, 2006, was affiliated to the International Ergonomics Association (EIA).

"ESN helped in developing the Ergonomics curriculum and delivery of lectures for the Centre for Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (COHSE) in the University of Port Harcourt. We have positioned ourselves to continuously make positive impact and contributions in our discipline to as many faculties in the University system that would offer opportunities to us as possible," Adaramola added.

He promised that the Society would assist the University in capacity building programmes and workshops for workers to enhance productivity and wellness, provision of expertise in developing and teaching Ergonomics or related courses, including support for the SERVICOM/Quality Assurance/Quality Control Unit.

The Society also extended an invitation to the Vice-Chancellor to grace the inauguration of the pioneer Board of Patrons of ESN which would witness the conferment of a Special Fellowship Award on him for his contributions to the growth of the Society and development of the University.

Other members of the delegation were: Drs. John Ugbebor, Roland Uhumwangho, Ken Madume, Idawarifa Cookey-Gam and Mrs. Opara Chibuzor.



V-C, Prof Lale (seated centre) flanked by President of ESN, Engr. Adaramola (left), Principal Officers, other members of the delegation and SAV-C, Mr. Kingsley Wogwu (3rd right standing)

Cont'd from
Page 1

with Management of
the University
before resorting to protest.

At the end of the inspection that took the Vice-Chancellor to project sites at the University Park and Choba Park, he seized the opportunity to address the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) Joint Campuses Committee, Rivers State Axis, led by Obinali Chukwu, the National Union of Rivers State Students led by its National President, Vincent Dan-Jumbo and the Niger Delta Students' Union led by Smart Edom and Efon Daniel, who accompanied him on the inspection tour, noting that the on-going hostel renovation work was part of what he resolved to do on assumption of duty as Vice-Chancellor.

"The state of the hostels then was totally unacceptable to us and we noticed that the renovation was long overdue since some may not have been touched since the inception of the school over 40 years ago. We may not have covered everything, but we are exploring the Public Private Partnership (PPP) platform for more developmental projects, including a world-class shopping mall financed by the *Everyday Group* and a befitting bookshop that would make the University of Port Harcourt a model institution.

The Vice-Chancellor also advised the students to desist from patronising trouble makers, who do not have the interest of the University at heart,

V-C Inspects Hostel Renovation Work

welfare, including other infrastructural development in the

noting that his administration was fully committed to adopting best global practice. "We will not allow a few students to ground the University, and even staff who are found guilty of dismissible offences would be made to face appropriate disciplinary action. We are committed to growing this University to its highest institutional potentials for the benefit of staff and students," he said.

Responding on behalf their colleagues, Obinali Chukwu and George Odu commended the Vice-Chancellor for embarking upon the renovation of hostels and his commitment to improved students'

University. "This is a step that goes a long way to show that you have the interest of the students at heart. We promise to sustain the cordial relationship that currently exists between students and the University Management and we promise never to allow trouble makers to disrupt law and order on this Campus again," the duo promised.

Other places also inspected during the tour included classrooms, lecture halls under renovation, the reconstructed burnt Faculty of Education building and the Faculty of Engineering Drawing Studio.



V-C, Prof Lale (arrowed) leading the team during the inspection

Cultivating People Skills In Service Delivery Among Staff

By Humphrey Ogu

One of the basic requirements in the 21st century work environment is what has generally become known as *people skills*. Simply put, *people skills* involve the ability to relate with people on a personal or professional level without airs or ego-tripping antics. For instance, such invaluable workplace skills as problem solving, team spirit, carrying on with minimum supervision and effective communication are elements of *people skills* in the 21st century workplace.

Unfortunately, however, majority of staff in the University of Port Harcourt are regrettably deficient in *people skills* which powers modern organisations. The engagement rules of staff without *people skills*—be it with other people, students and non-students alike, including sundry stakeholders in the affairs of the University—leave much to be desired these days. Some staff have the predilection

for looking down on visitors whose identity they do not know. The younger the stranger appears to be, the worst reception he or she would receive from front desk officers in most instances. An encounter with such staff could be the direct equivalent of straying into enemy territory in a battle setting. Such insensitive staff do not take prisoners, in a manner of speaking. This distasteful attitude is common among some teaching and non-teaching staff of this University.

Yours truly has been a victim of such primordial attitude by staff who were not aware that the person they maltreated was a *bona fide* staff of the University. There have been cases of staff refusing to attend to students and other clients by claiming to be on break or closed for the day at a time they should be at their duty post. Some staff are fond of preventing visitors from seeing their bosses, unless they directly ascertain the purpose of such visits. Inexplicable hostility to clients in dire need of institutional

services is a major part of the reason this country is, to say the least, on the reverse gear. The essence of *people skills* directly explains the emergence of customer care in corporate organisations and personal business outfits.

In the 21st century business environment, it is no longer fashionable for one to work into an office and be confronted by incompetent staff who bring their personal problems to the office. The development of an organisation is dependent on many factors and various stakeholders. For instance, the alumni of a university are critical stakeholders in the growth of their *alma mater*. All over the world, alumni play a very vital role in the development of the institutions where they received their education. This makes it obligatory for universities to make conscientious effort in building formidable alumni by delivering satisfactory services to the clients of the institutions, especially students, who are potential alumni.

A little digression would suffice at this point: apart from boosting the reputation of their *alma mater*, well-placed alumni are known to have made meaningful contributions to the development of their *alma mater*. In UniPort, for instance, the galaxy of very successful Nollywood stars, the array of prominent politicians and world-class scholars have helped in building the image of the University. Such distinguished alumni as former President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, Professor Nimi Wariboko, Dr. Godknows Igali, Dr. Franklin Osaigali, Dr. Alex Otti, Chibuike Amaechi, Nyesom Wike, Stanley Lawson, have at various times, contributed to the growth of the University through infrastructural development, book donation or endowment of professorial chairs. All this would not have been possible if these people were maltreated by teaching and non-teaching staff in their days as students.

Treating a visitor to an office with disdain is an attitude that should be seen as a total anathema in a citadel of learning that thrives on cultural diversity and liberal outlook; it does not belong to the new knowledge economy either. Staff in a 21st century university setting should be courteous to clients and other visitors like customer relations officers. There should be no room for prejudice based on age, gender or evidence of social or economic status.

People skills essentially refer to undiluted dedication to efficient service delivery to clients in a transparent and honest manner. It is a sure way of boosting productivity, which in turn, ushers in an enabling environment for organisational growth and service satisfaction.



Registry staff listening to the 5th Registry Day Lecture delivered by Mr. Roland Wabali

GUIDE POST

APPOINTMENT

Professor Okechuku Onuchuku, Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, appointed *Director, University of Port Harcourt Business School*. The two-year appointment which takes effect on February 25, 2017, will terminate on February 24, 2019.

Dr. Boniface Orijil, Department of Petroleum Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, appointed *Assistant Director, Institute of Petroleum Studies*. The two-year appointment, which takes immediate effect, will terminate on January 5, 2019.

Dr. Gladys Emenike, Department of Geography and Environmental Management, Faculty of Social Sciences, appointed *Acting Director, Centre for Logistics and Transport Studies*. The two-year appointment, which takes effect on January 21, 2017, will terminate on January 20, 2019.

Dr. Tochukwu Okonkwo, Department of Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, appointed *Acting Head of Department*. The two-year appointment, which takes immediate effect, will terminate on January 3, 2019.

Dr. Chinyere Pedro-Egbe, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, appointed *Acting Head of Department*. The two-year appointment, which takes effect on January 21, 2017, will terminate January 20, 2019.

Dr. Chinyelu Ojukwu, Department of English Studies, Faculty of Humanities, appointed *Acting Head of Department*. The two-year appointment, which takes effect January 9, 2017, will terminate January 8, 2019.

Dr. Loveday Oghenemavwe, Department of Human Anatomy, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, appointed *Coordinator of Biomedical Technology Programme, School of Science Laboratory Technology (SSLT)*. The two-year appointment which, takes immediate effect, will terminate January 3, 2019.

Dr. Chimeze Ogugbue, Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Science, appointed *Associate Dean, School of Science Laboratory Technology (SSLT)*. The two-year appointment, which takes immediate effect, will terminate January 3, 2017.

Dr. Abosede Arokoye, Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology, Faculty of Education, appointed *Member of the Degree Results Verification Committee (DRVC)*. The appointment, which takes immediate effect is until further notice.

Dr. Sydney Nzeako, Department of Animal and Environmental Biology, Faculty of Science, appointed *Member of the Degree Results Verification Committee (DRVC)*. The appointment, which takes immediate effect is until further notice.

Dr. Jonah Aprioku, Department of Experimental Pharmacology and Toxicology, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, appointed *Acting Head of Department*. The two-year appointment, which takes immediate effect will terminate January 3, 2019.

Dr. Mercy Ifeanchor, Department of Biochemistry Faculty of Medical Sciences, appointed *Coordinator of Biochemistry Technology Programme, School of Science Laboratory Technology (SSLT)*. The two-year appointment which takes immediate effect will terminate on January 3, 2019.

STUDY LEAVE

Dr. Chioma Onyige, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, granted a 10-month *Study Leave with Pay* to enable her utilize the Commonwealth offer of Academic Fellowship at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom, effective January 8, 2017 to November 7, 2017.

STOP PRESS

SENATE'S DECISION ON ACCEPTANCE FEE

Preparatory to the commencement of academic activities for the new session, Senate has directed all candidates offered Provisional Admission into the University of Port Harcourt for the 2016/2017 academic session to pay their Acceptance Fees on or before the close of work on Friday, January 20, 2017.

A statement signed on behalf of the Registrar by the Deputy Registrar in charge of Academic Affairs, Dr. Agatha Ataga and made available to *UniPort Weekly*, warned that any candidate who fails to comply with the directive will summarily forfeit his or her admission into the University.

The statement which was addressed to the Acting Director of the Information and Communication Technology Centre (ICTC), and copied to Principal Officers, other Line Officers and CINFORES Limited (the firm in charge of fee collection), was a major part of the decisions reached at a Meeting of the Committee of Provost and Deans on Wednesday, January 5, 2017 at the Vice-Chancellor's Committee Room.

Okerengwo Chairs Student Disciplinary C'ttee

Professor Anthonia Okerengwo of the Department of Haematology, Immunology and Blood Transfusion in the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, has been appointed Chairman of a new body to be known as *Student Disciplinary and Related Matters Committee (SDRMC)*. The appointment which takes immediate effect is until further notice. The appointment was contained in a letter personally signed by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale, a copy of which was obtained by *UniPort Weekly*.

Other members of the Committee are: Drs. Uzoma Chima, Chima Wokocha, Gift Worlu, Edward Imo, Gladys Emenike, Tobinon Briggs, Lt. Col. Reginald Isiguzo (rtd), Dean Student Affairs, while the Special Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, Mr. Kingsley Wogwu will serve as Secretary.

The Committee's Terms of Reference (ToR) include the following: To advise the Management of the Student Affairs Department on all matters relating to students, develop strategies for gathering intelligence among students, both on and off Campus, to address all rumoured or planned uprising among students within the Campus and in the host communities in conjunction with security agencies.

The Committee is also to receive and investigate allegations of misconduct by students and other related matters and the involvement of staff in such cases. It will also receive and investigate allegations of incitement, encouragement and sponsorship of unwholesome activities amongst staff of the University, including overt and covert incitement of students to carry out mayhem, violence and threats to law and order in the University.

The Committee is empowered to make appropriate recommendations to Senate in respect of its Terms of Reference. It is also expected to hold regular meetings and submit monthly reports on its activities to the Vice-Chancellor.

The letter of appointment added that by the constitution of the Committee, the former Students Affairs Advisory Committee (SAAC) has ceased to exist.

Amakoroma Heads UniPort Business School Academic Advisory Board

Professor Ebi Amakoroma of the Department of Microbiology in the Faculty of Science, has been appointed *Chairman, Academic Advisory Board*, University of Port Harcourt Business School (UPHBS). The appointment was contained in a letter signed by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale and made available to *UniPort Weekly*. It stated that the appointment, which took retroactive effect from March 2, 2016, is for two years and will terminate on March 1, 2018.

"As Chairman of the Board," the letter stated in part, "you will be responsible to Senate through the Vice-Chancellor for the following functions: to advise on new programme proposals and major revisions to curriculum of existing programmes in the School, to recommend policies concerning student selection, progression and advise on improvements.

Others are to review and advise on student assessment and academic standards, to review and advise on the operating procedures for ensuring academic quality, integrity and security of assessment tasks and results, to monitor and advise on policies and activities directed to continuous improvement in the School, and to advise on any other matter that may be helpful in running the programmes in the School, the letter stated.

Other members of the Board include Professors Raphael Ngochindo, Anthonia Okerengwo and Dr. Rosemary Ogu, while the Directors of UPHBS and College of Continuing Education and Deans of the School of Graduate Studies and Faculty of Management Sciences are Ex-Officio members.

The letter further stated that the appointment of the other members (excluding the ex-officio members of the Governing Board), which takes effect from January 6, 2017, is for two years and will terminate on January 5, 2019.

Visitation Panel To Engineering Faculty

Professor Regina Ogali of the Department of Pure and Industrial Chemistry in the Faculty of Science, has been appointed *Chairman, Visitation Panel to Faculty of Engineering*. The appointment, which takes immediate effect, is until the completion of the assignment, a letter signed by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ndowa Lale and made available to *UniPort Weekly* stated.

Other members of the Committee are Professors Barisua Nwince, Chukwudi Onyeaso, Henry Alapiki and Ikechukwu Agbagwa, while the Registrar is to appoint a Secretary.

The Committee's Terms of Reference (ToR) include: To look into the records of graduation of undergraduate students (Full-Time and Post-HND), including semester results and spreadsheets of the Faculty of Engineering, from the commencement of the policy of waiver of two failed courses to date and examining the level of compliance of Faculty to the standards recommended by the Faculty and approved by Senate.

The Committee is also charged with responsibility to investigate whether all the students who graduated from the Faculty of Engineering in the period referred to in (i) above, met the criteria for graduating students in the Faculty as spelt out in Section 8 of the General Regulations and Statement of Academic Policies (GRSAP). It would also make appropriate recommendations based on the findings, and any other recommendations incidental to its assignment as may be deemed appropriate and submit a report to Senate within eight weeks from January 6, 2017.

ACCE 2016 CONFAB IN UNIPORT

The Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies in the Faculty of Humanities hosted the 18th National Conference of the African Council for Communication Education at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium from Wednesday, 26 to Friday, October 29, 2016. With the theme: *Communication for Economic Development*, the three-day Conference attracted Communication scholars from within and outside the Country. Our Cameraman, **HEADMAN ALU** captured pictorial highlights of the Conference as shown below:



Participants registering at the Foyer of the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium



Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof Okey Onuchuku delivering V-C's remarks at the opening ceremony



Dean, Faculty of Humanities, Prof Femi Shaka making his opening remarks



Ag HoD, LCS, Dr. Baridisi Isaac welcoming guests to the Confab



National Coordinator of ACCE, Prof Danjuma Gambo presenting his welcome address



Director of Claude Ake School of Government, Prof Eme Ekeke giving the Keynote address



Prof Ekeke receiving ovation from some dignitaries after delivering the address



A participant asking question after the keynote presentation



R-L: Profs Ozo-mekuri Ndimele, Desmond Wilson and Philomena Ejele



Profs Gambo, Walter Ihejirika and Dr. Austen Sado exchanging pleasantries



Prof Des Wilson presenting ACCE Journal to participants



A cross-section of participants



A group photograph of some participants after the opening ceremony