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PCN Inducts New Pharmacists In UniPort

By Otikor Samuel

No fewer than 102 new Pharmacists trained in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Port Harcourt, have been inducted into the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) at the 10th Oath-taking/Swearing-in ceremony held on Monday, November 8, 2021 at Ebitimi

Banigo Auditorium.

In his speech before swearing in the Inductees, Registrar of the PCN, Pharm Elijah Mohammed, congratulated the Inductees for completing the first phase of their training in the University. He also commended Management, staff of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and

parents for providing the new Pharmacists the opportunity to be trained in the University.

“The second phase of your Pharmacy training starts with the one-year statutory internship programme which is compulsory for all Pharmacists in Nigeria, including those trained abroad without evidence of

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Zoologists Chart Dev Pathways

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Ex Students Donate to Dept



A group photograph of DVC (Admin), Prof Ofurum, leadership of PCN and Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Inductees

VC Promises New CRAB for Theatre Arts Dept

By Sam Kpenu



VC, Prof Georgewill receiving a crab design from the Department

Vice Chancellor, what they think is a Professor Owunari The CRAB. From time Georgewill has to time TETFund promised to build a gives us money, and new and more then we look at befitting Arts Theatre, projects to put the popularly known as money to. If I have the The CRAB for the design, when next Department of TETFund gives an Theatre and Film allocation, I will Studies. The Vice channel it to build a Chancellor made the befitting Arts pledge while speaking Theatre,” the Vice at “An Evening with the Vice Chancellor” The Dean, Faculty of organised to mark his 100 days in office on Friday, November 5, 2021 at the UniPort Arts Theatre, Delta Park. “Let the Professors and the HoD meet with the Director of the Department of Physical Planning and Development to design

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FG, States Should Invest in Research to Solve Economic Woes ~ *Ukpabi*

By Sam Kpenu



A cross section of participants at the workshop

Federal and State governments have been asked to inject funds into entrepreneurial research to solve economic woes occasioned by the Coronavirus pandemic and other crises ravaging the nation.

President of the Centre for Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation (CEMRI), Dr Dandison Ukpabi, gave the charge at the opening ceremony of a three-day International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Business and Economic Restoration in post-COVID-19 Africa which held from Wednesday, 10th to Friday, 12th November, 2021 at the Ebitimi Banigo

Auditorium, University of Port Harcourt.

The conference organised in partnership with the University of Port Harcourt Entrepreneurship Centre (UPEC), had speakers from foreign universities and within the nation as well.

Ukpabi, a post-Doctoral researcher at the University of Finland, noted that inter-university research collaboration among Nigerian scholars was weak, stressing the need to strengthen it. He said: "Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) should begin to think outside the box, organise competitions to identify ideas that could be funded."

Declaring the Conference open, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, said the conference was timely, noting that it would synthesise ideas on how entrepreneurial ventures would support the rebuilding of Africa's economies ravaged in recent times by the COVID-19 pandemic and

other negative factors.

The Vice Chancellor added that in line with the entrepreneurial vision, the University had been training students, host communities and other stakeholders on entrepreneurship.

Earlier in his address, the Director of University of Port Harcourt Entrepreneurship Centre, Professor Chinedu Ogbuji, said the theme of the conference, "Entrepreneurship, Business and Economic Restoration in Post COVID-19 Africa" was apt, given the realities the COVID-19 pandemic foisted on the global economy.

One of the speakers, Professor Juho Pesonen, Head, E-Tourism Research, Tourism Marketing and Research Expert, University of Eastern Finland, said the tourism industry needs to be customer-oriented and attuned to local people, adding that anyone could be anything he or she aspired to be through collaboration.

Experts Advocate Religious Tolerance

By Ethel Timi-Johnson

Experts from the academia and religious circle gathered at the Department of Religious and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Humanities to deliberate on issues bordering on consolidating religious tolerance in Nigeria.

Speaking at the Workshop with the theme, *Building Social Cohesion through Interreligious Dialogue* which held at the Faculty auditorium on Wednesday, November 3, 2021, representative of the Vice Chancellor, Professor Hope Kabo, disclosed that the event which is partly sponsored by the KAICIID International Fellow Programme for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue buttresses the fact that the University is a focal point for intellectual programmes aimed at proffering solution to societal issues.

"The University is a melting point for ideas and so scholars need to remain in active dialogue to address societal issues. There is need for continuous dialogue and more platforms to allow us address societal problems from the intellectual viewpoint," Professor Kabo said, expressing hope that participants at the Workshop would come up with discussions on how to build social cohesion in a country with diverse ethnic groups.

Facilitator of the Workshop and a Lecturer in the Department of

Religious and Cultural Studies, Dr Suberu Ibrahim noted that the Workshop was in fulfillment of the KAICIID Fellowship. He described KAICIID as an intergovernmental organisation saddled with the responsibility of promoting harmonious relationship between local, international and transactional bodies through workshops and programmes. "This Workshop which is aimed at enhancing dialogue and building social cohesion would enable us suspend judgement and bias for different religious sect and have a better understanding of religion. There is need for us to see dialogue as a culture of expressing our differences. We need to develop a deep understanding of values and differences which exist in every society," he remarked.

In his presentation on *Building Social Cohesion through Interreligious Dialogue: Islamic Approach*, Professor Abdulrazaq Kilani, also of the Department, called on leaders to consciously act as agents of social change. "Promoting religious and cultural literacy is an important factor in overcoming hatred and extremism. We need to promote peace and unity of humankind by shunning ethnic division and bigotry," he stressed.

Other presentations at the Workshop included, *Building*



A cross section of participants

Social Cohesion through Interreligious Dialogue: Lessons from the Brotherhood of Cross and Stars, the African Perspective and the Christian Perspective delivered by Professor Ilami Clive, Drs Grace Lawrence-Hart and Ndidi Gbule, respectively.

Council Approves Appointment of Tamuno, Ekeh, Others as Directors

By Otikor Samuel

The Governing Council of the University has approved the appointment of seven senior officers as Directors. The appointment was conveyed by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill in separate letters to the appointees dated October 29, 2021. Of the seven

appointments, six are of the Registry Department, while one is of the Bursary Department.

Those appointed are: Mrs Joyce Tamuno, Mr Stephen Ekeh, Dr Agatha Ataga, Dr Mite Ngeh, Mrs Irene Wariso-Madugba and Mrs Flora Iyagba for the Registry Department and Mr Aribite Princewill as Director,

Systems in the Bursary Department.

The Vice Chancellor disclosed that the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, Senator Andrew Uchendu approved the appointment

executively on behalf of the Governing Council. The appointments are with effect from January 1, 2021.

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VC Promises New CRAB for Theatre Arts...

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Presenting a beautifully structured design of the insignia of a Crab as a token of appreciation to the Vice Chancellor, the Acting Head of Department, Dr Innocent Uwah, also showered praises on the Vice Chancellor for his visionary leadership and urged him to sustain the tempo.

Responding to the presentation, the Vice Chancellor, who said he has been a regular attendee to performance at *The CRAB* since his undergraduate days at the medical school in the University in the 1980s, assured them that the insignia presented to him would be placed in his office to the envy of his guests.

Professor Julie Umokoro, delivering the vote of thanks lauded the Vice Chancellor for his numerous achievements within his first 100 days in office. She also thanked him for granting her leave to take up an ambassadorial appointment.

The event organised by the Department of Theatre and Film Studies featured stage presentation of Ola Rotimi's *Hopes of the Living Dead*.

Zoologists Deliberate on Nigeria's Economic Dev at Annual Confab

By Humphrey Ogu



DVC (R&D), Prof Siminialayi (arrowed), flanked by the leadership and members of ZSN after the opening ceremony

Deliberations on the roles Zoologists could play in the economic development of Nigeria was the thrust of 14th Annual Conference of the Zoological Society of Nigeria (ZSN) in University of Port Harcourt. The Conference, which held at Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium, from Tuesday, November 9, to Thursday, November 11, 2021, had "The Role of Zoology in the Economic Development of Nigeria in the 21st Century", as its theme.

Declaring the Conference open, Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, who welcomed the conferees to the University, described Zoology as one of the core Biological Sciences that has become popular over the years. Represented by Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Development), Professor Iyeopu Siminialayi, the Vice Chancellor, said: "Beyond food and nutrition needs of our nation, Zoology can tell us what we can export, what marine industries we can create, what creatures we should look at more closely, and what species are facing extinction and need urgent attention in terms of preservation."

In his address, outgoing ZSN President, Professor Alex Ugwumba, emphasised the importance of

reaffirming the society's commitment to: disseminate original research findings in all areas of Zoology, show linkage of research with teaching and learning in higher institutions and other relevant organisations, further and foster development and application in areas such as agriculture, medicine, environmental and nature-based organisations as well as other related fields.

Professor Onome Bubu-Davies of Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, delivered the Keynote Speech on the theme of the Conference, while Professor Adetola Badejo of Obafemi Awolowo, Ile-Ife, delivered a second lecture on the "Threnody for the Taxonomist in the 21st Century." Lead papers were presented by Professor Alex Odaibo of University of Ibadan and Professor Paschal Etusim of Abia State University, Uturu. Vice Chancellor, Rivers State University, Professor Ity

Nlerum Okogbule, was represented at the event by Director of Quality Assurance, Professor Eric Amadi, who gave a goodwill message. Dean, Faculty of Science, University of Port Harcourt, Professor Eka Essien, also gave a goodwill message.

Earlier in her welcome address, Chairman, Local Organising Committee of the Conference, Professor Florence Nduka said: "We are grateful that the conference is finally holding after the postponement of 2020, due to multifarious reasons. We received over 120 abstracts and have made adequate provisions for quality presentations. We thank the VC of UniPort for approval and support, the VC of RSU for providing logistics for staff and students to join the event and lavish reception at courtesy visit to his office. We also thank our sponsors and wish the participants warm welcome and a successful conference."

Activities of Bandits, Trees Felling Threatening Grassland Conservation ~ Alawa

By Sam Kpenu



DVC (Acad), Prof Owete (right) touring the Exhibition Stand

The occupation of forests by bandits, indiscriminate felling of trees and other human factors have become a matter of concern for agricultural professionals, as these activities threaten sustainable grazing and conservation of grasslands in Nigeria.

Professor Clement Alawa stated this in his keynote address entitled: "Setting the Agenda for Technology-driven Grassland-based Animal Agriculture in Nigeria," delivered at the 4th Biennial Conference of the Society for Grassland Research and Development in Nigeria (SOGREDEN), which held at the Institute of Petroleum Studies, on Monday, November 8, 2021.

The Professor of Animal Health and Production described the conference as timely in view of the current national issues

surrounding open grazing and anti-open grazing of cattle and livestock in Nigeria. Highlighting the importance of grasslands, Alawa who said it serves as a food source for livestock, habitat for wildlife and offers environmental protection, raised concerns that the activities of humans stemming from over population is increasingly posing a threat to grasslands, which according to him are rapidly decreasing and going into extinction.

Professor Alawa, who is also the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), University of Abuja, said the human activities threaten the existence and food sustainability of livestock that largely depend on grasslands for feeding, thereby resulting in grazing at locations the livestock should not ordinarily be feeding from such as major roads in towns and villages, and private properties.

He also posited that the strenuous migrations for greener pasture of livestock are impacting negatively on the healthy state of the animals. Alawa, a Fellow of the College of Veterinary Surgeons of Nigeria, recommended that the government policy on grasslands be changed with a view to subsidising agriculture, and that there should be special allocation of lands and adequate funding for agriculture. He also advocated the inclusion and adoption of modern technology in the management of grasslands to improve productivity beyond the present need of animal-based agriculture.

Earlier, while declaring the conference open, the Vice Chancellor of UniPort, represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), Professor

Kingsley Owete, described the conference as timely in the light of the growing concerns over the Community/Farmer-Herders crisis resulting from open grazing of cattle in unauthorised places.

The Vice Chancellor, who highlighted some challenges faced by the University in animal pasture-based livestock farming, also expressed hope that the conferees would fully utilise the knowledge shared during the Conference, with a view to improving teaching and learning in the Faculty of Agriculture.

On his part, the former Vice Chancellor of Kebbi State University and SOGREDEN National President, Professor Bello Shehu Malami who said the society hopes to change the status quo in livestock production by providing the desired expertise for revolutionising the grassland sector, also commended the Vice Chancellor for his hospitality, and the University of Port Harcourt for voluntarily offering to host this year's conference.

The Conference featured panel discussions by Dr Tunde Adegoke Amole, Country Representative of the International Livestock Research Institute, Ibadan; Dr Roger Tanko from the National Production Research Institute, Zaria and Chief Simon Owhofa, Managing Director, Nutrivitas Nigeria Limited, Lagos and First Vice President of the Nigerian Institute of Animal Science.

The theme of this year's conference was, "Grasslands Development for Improved Livestock Productivity and Farmers-Herders Coexistence: Option or Imperative for Nigeria."

Law Faculty Inaugurates Okey Wali Chamber

By Sam Kpenu



Dean, Faculty of Law, Prof Worika (3rd right), Wali (SAN) (3rd left) and others

Law Students in the University of Port Harcourt have been enjoined to uphold the ethics and dignity of the legal profession in the course of their training and subsequent practice.

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Okey Wali, gave the charge during the inauguration and induction ceremony of student members of the Okey Wali Chambers in the University of Port Harcourt. The event which took place at the Law Faculty Auditorium on November 4, 2021, saw the induction of 43 members of the chamber.

The former Attorney General of Rivers State and Commissioner for Justice thanked the Faculty of Law for the honour of naming a chamber after him. "Being part of Okey Wali Chambers has responsibilities. It comes with assets and liabilities. The assets are that we will take more interest in what you are doing here. This is because you are now identified with this name. We will work very closely with you to make sure you do things right," he told the Inductees.

The 26th President of the Nigeria Bar Association also corrected the impression that the law profession is about making money, stating that

it is about rendering selfless service to humanity. He disclosed that financial benefit would come later, pointing out that the driving force should first be for the love of the profession.

Wali also called for caution on the part of the Inductees, as they commence a career in Law, warning them to be disciplined and of good conduct. "If you are coming into the profession, you must come, knowing that what attracted you is the behaviour and carriage of lawyers. The dignity of the profession must be sustained at all times. It comes with respect for other people. It is a very orderly profession, and I can tell you; so long as you carry yourself well in this profession you will rise to the pinnacle," he added.

On his part, the Dean, Faculty of Law, Professor Lucky Worika raised concerns over the current quota of students admitted into the Faculty, describing the 50-student per session admission quota as too small.

Professor Worika appealed that the quota be increased to at least 150, to allow more room for others to obtain legal education in the University.

"The demand for legal education is quite high, and in this University, we see over 3,500 applications per year. The system of distillation is so intense, systematically excluding people who otherwise should have access to University education. They

pass very well, but they can't be taken, with all the quota systems and catchment area," he bemoaned.

The Dean, while speaking on the essence of setting up different student chambers, said it is a stepping stone designed to give the students the practical knowledge and aspects of running a law firm, as they will be involved in moot and mock trial competitions, debates and activism.

Speaking on behalf of the Executives and inducted members of the Okey Wali Chambers, the President, Felix Amadi who appreciated invited guests from other Departments for honouring the invitation, also expressed delight of members of the Chamber, for the physical presence of the distinguished Senior Advocate of Nigeria, who not only came in person, but also came along with top members of his legal team.

Highlights of the event was the furnishing and equipping of the Law Faculty e-library and the unveiling of a pet project and the installation of notice boards in all Classrooms, by the members of Okey Wali Chambers.

Dignitaries present at the occasion included the Chairman, Nigeria Bar Association, Port Harcourt Branch, Prince Nyekwere, Heads of Department, lecturers, staff and students of the Faculty of Law and guests invited to witness the induction exercise.

ELPU, OWSD Mount Data Training for Researchers

By Ethel Timi-Johnson

The Exchange and Linkage Programmes Unit (ELPU) in the Office of the Vice Chancellor and the Organisation for Women in Science for Developing World (OWSD), University of Port Harcourt branch have ended a one-day workshop on *Data Management* for researchers and Doctoral candidates in the University.

Speaking at the Workshop which held at the ELPD Conference Room on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, the Acting Director of the Unit and President of UniPort OWSD, Dr Eucharia Nwaichi, observed that the training was a fall-out of a recently-concluded 5-day Proposal Writing Workshop organised by the UniPort Innovation Ecosystem Project (UP-ECOSIN) and the OWSD. "Based on the feedback we received from the last workshop, we decided to expose the researchers to the rudiments of data management. We want to equip scholars in the University with tools needed to manage intimidating amount of data associated with research and related projects in line with their call of duty," she said.

Dr Nwaichi further noted that in the long run, the knowledge acquired by the participants would enable them attract grants, fellowships and scholarship that would improve the global ranking of the University, enhance visibility and facilitate international and local collaborations. "So, you see that there are huge expectations from you. It is expected that you become experts in report writing and data management and even train others. The overall aim is to grow your capacity as researchers whose projects could birth several



ELPU Ag Director, Dr Nwaichi (centre), flanked by Prof Adesope (right), other participants and staff of the Unit

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation," the OWSD President stated.

In his presentation on *Data Management*, Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Professor Olufemi Adesope, stressed

the need for researchers to be exposed to software that would facilitate data analysis for differences and relationships. The Workshop featured both interactive and practical sessions on the use of statistical software SPSS and Microsoft Excel.

Council Approves DIA, CSO Appointments

By Sam Kpenu

Following the successful conduct of interview, the Governing Council has approved the appointment of a substantive Director for the Internal Audit Unit and Chief Security Officer of the University. The Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, in a

letter dated October 28, 2021, conveyed Council approval of the appointment of Dr Boniface Woko as the substantive Director, Internal Audit Unit.

The Vice Chancellor stated that "the appointment is for a tenure of five (5) years in the first instance, renewable for a second tenure of five years, subject to satisfactory performance."

In a related development, the Vice Chancellor has

also conveyed Council approval of the appointment of a former Commissioner of Police, CP Alali Pedro (rtd) as new Chief Security of the University. The letter of appointment revealed that the Contract Appointment is for one year and renewable annually.

The Vice Chancellor congratulated Dr Woko and CP Alali for emerging successful at the interview. He wished them well in their new positions, enjoining them to give of their best to the University.

177th Inaugural Ugwu Advocates Paediatric HIV Prevention in Nigeria

By Humphrey Ogu



177th Inaugural Lecturer, Prof Ugwu handing over a copy of the text to DVC (Admin), Prof Ofurum

Issues bordering on preventing Mother-To-Child Transmission (MTCT) of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and eliminating paediatric HIV in Nigeria were the main focus of the 177th Inaugural Lecture delivered by Professor Rosemary Ugwu at Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium on Thursday, November 11, 2021.

Ugwu who is of the Department of Paediatric and Child Health, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences spoke on the topic: "Paediatric HIV, Totally Preventable-Challenges in Management: Are We Equal to the Task?" She listed the individual/family, community, health facility, government and non-governmental levels as the different units where paediatric HIV/AIDS could be prevented.

Highlighting the contributions of paediatric HIV infections to childhood morbidity and mortality in the country, Ugwu said that majority of the

cases results from MTCT. "When children living with HIV have access to treatment, they do well and can live a normal, healthy lives, just like any other child. We should stop stigmatising and discriminating against them," she advised.

On whether it is possible to totally eliminate new HIV infection in children in Nigeria, the 177th Inaugural Lecturer drawing inspiration from the famous campaign slogan of ex-President Barack Obama said: "Yes, we can totally eliminate paediatric HIV. Yes, we can address the needs of already infected children. Yes, we can support these children adequately. Yes, we can protect them from becoming the next wave of pandemic."

Ugwu, who disclosed that she had been involved in training both undergraduate and postgraduate medical personnel on the care of HIV-exposed and infected children since her employment in the University, said she had contributed to knowledge with presentation of over 38 papers in local and international conferences. "I have also successfully supervised 10 dissertations for senior residents

towards their Part II exams in the Postgraduate Medical College," she said, adding that nine of them have become Consultants and Senior Lecturers, while one has risen to the rank of a Professor.

In his remarks, Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, commended Professor Ugwu for well researched and properly presented lecture on a very critical area of human health. Represented by Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administration), Professor Clifford Ofurum, the Vice Chancellor said: "given the importance of the topic, one would have expected that staff and students will attend in their numbers to benefit from the knowledge shared by this erudite scholar. It is sad that has not been the case. The Inaugural Lecturer had urged us to stop stigmatising against HIV/AIDS."

Meanwhile the 178th Inaugural Lecture to be delivered by Professor Ikechukwu Agbagwa of the Department of Plant Science and Biotechnology on Thursday December 16, 2021 will be on the topic: "Taxonomic Complexities and Molecular Diversity: Ancient and Modern."

Another Unique UniPort Alumnus Emerges IAUE VC

By Humphrey Ogu

An Alumnus of the University of Port Harcourt, Professor Okey Onuchuku, has been appointed Acting Vice Chancellor of the Rivers State-owned Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE). In addition to teaching and research activities, Onuchuku, who is also of the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Social Sciences, has previously served his Alma Mater in various capacities.

He was Head, Department of Economics from 2010 to 2014, Associate Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, 2006 to 2008, Dean 2015 to 2017, and Director, University of Port Harcourt Business School 2017 to 2020. The Professor of Economics was a member of the University of Port Harcourt Governing Council.

Onuchuku has also served the Rivers State and Federal governments in various capacities at different times. He was Chairman, Board of Directors of Rivers State Bureau on Public

Procurement, Vice Chairman, Presidential Committee on NEEDS Assessment of Nigerian Public Colleges of Education, Team Leader, Presidential Committee on NEEDS Assessment of Nigerian Public Universities, amongst others.

As the new helmsman of the IAUE, Onuchuku takes over from Professor Ozo-mekuri Ndimele, another alumnus and erstwhile Dean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Port Harcourt, who has transformed the little-known institution to one of the fastest growing universities in Nigeria.

In his congratulatory message, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, expressed hope that Professor Onuchuku would bring his wealth of experience to bare in his new assignment. He commended the Visitor and Governor of Rivers State, His Excellency, Nyesom Ezeunwo Wike for appointing an alumnus of the University of Port Harcourt who is also a seasoned scholar and administrator in the University, to serve as Vice Chancellor of the Ignatius Ajuru



Prof Onuchuku

University of Education.

"I am very hopeful that your coming on board as the Acting Vice Chancellor will witness the consolidation of the evident gains recorded on your previous positions of trust. The appointment will also consolidate on the giant strides left by the outgoing Vice Chancellor of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Professor Ozo-mekuri Ndimele," Professor Georgewill said, in a statement he issued through the University's Public Relations Officer.

PCN Inducts New Pharmacists...

Cont'd from Page 1

licensure in their countries of practice,” the PCN Registrar told the Inductees. He informed them that they would be expected to sit and pass a Pre-registration Examination for Pharmacists (PEP) after their internship to be eligible to practise in the country.

“As Pharmacists, you are expected to get yourselves acquainted with the Code of Professional Ethics which prescribes your professional and moral responsibilities to the patients, pharmacist colleagues, other health professionals, your employers and the general public, among others. Strict compliance to the code of ethics is indispensable for the practice of Pharmacy profession,” Pharm

Mohammed stated.

“I congratulate you all once again on this occasion of admission into the practice of Pharmacy profession. Your Oath-taking and Induction into the profession does not set you free from further guidance by your parents. Their oversight responsibilities would still be much needed to guide you through the second and the life-long phases of the Pharmacy training as well as the school of life,” the Registrar added.

In his welcome address, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, who was represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administration), Professor Clifford Ofurum, enjoined the Inductees to be good ambassadors of the University. “As a University, we congratulate you for is a

coming out successful in the intensive pharmaceutical training. Always remember where you are coming from. UniPort is a unique brand. It is a Centre of Excellence in various fields, including medical and allied fields. We do not expect anything less from you as you go into the world,” the Deputy Vice Chancellor told the graduands on behalf of the Vice Chancellor.

Olumide Akintayo delivered the keynote address on the topic: “The Road to an Impactful Pharmacy Practice.” Dean of the Faculty, Professor Ogbonna Okorie, who disclosed the number of graduands for the ceremony, also commended all stakeholders for the successful training of the students. Chinyere Claire Ben-Njoku who emerged the Best Graduating Student gave the valedictory speech.

Stakeholders Call for Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria at CDRMDS Confab

By Sunny Dada

Emergency and Disaster Risk Management stakeholders have called for an inclusive disaster risk management approach in Nigeria. The call was made at the just-concluded 3rd Biennial Regional Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria, held on November 15–16, 2021, at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium.

The conference which had in attendance the academia, practitioners and policymakers, was organised by the Centre for Disaster Risk Management and Development Studies (CDRMDS) in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

In his welcome remark, the Vice Chancellor Professor Georgewill Owunari, who was represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Development), Professor Iyeopu Siminialayi, welcomed the participants to the University of Port Harcourt and applauded the CDRMDS and NEMA for the conference. The Vice Chancellor who expressed his delight that Nigeria was taking a leading role at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), stated that the biennial conference was coming at a time when there is a global focus on climate and environmental disasters. Describing disasters as an indicator of poor risk management, the Vice Chancellor charged the stakeholders to re-examine current approaches to disaster risk management in order to achieve global milestones in the mitigation of risks and disasters occasioned by human activities.

Earlier, the immediate past Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Stephen Okodudu, who was also the Chairman of the event, described the University of Port Harcourt as a unique institution due to its location “in a fragile eco-system.” Professor Okodudu who emphasised the need for the strict implementation of environmental laws and policies in Nigeria, stated that disaster risk management must begin “with the understanding that man must cooperate with the environment by protecting it from harmful practices.”

Speaking on the objectives of the conference and the



Guests in a group photograph after a courtesy visit on the VC

extent of collaboration between CDRMDS and NEMA, the Director General of NEMA, Alhaji Habib Ahmed who was represented by the Liaison Officer at the National Assembly, disclosed that NEMA was proud to adopt the CDRMDS as a centre of excellence. While noting that the agency has transited from a relief agency to a disaster management institution, the Director General stated, however, that there was a need for the fusion of efforts to address the worsening environmental challenges faced by Nigeria. He, therefore, urged conferees to be mindful of critical environmental challenges in the Niger Delta when making their contributions.

In a similar vein, the Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Special Duties, Senator Degi Eremiyo, noted that there was need to translate several “talk-shops” into practical actions. He bemoaned the failure of government to adequately harness the massive mineral resources that abound in the country, stating that Nigeria could not have had any reason to borrow if it had adequately harnessed her rich environmental resources across the six geo-political regions. He pleaded with participants to take advantage of the conference to provide templates of collaborative

research that would address the myriad of environmental challenges bedevilling the Niger Delta.

Delivering the keynote address entitled: “Reducing Disaster Risk, Improving Humanitarian Actions,” the Director General of the FCT Emergency Management Agency, Mr Abbas Idriss, regretted that the “demands of nature and activities of man continue to create humanitarian risk challenges.” He said despite the avalanche of risk management experts in the country, disaster risk challenges continue to pose serious threats and further complicate humanitarian challenges.

Mr Idriss stated that experience had shown that it is much easier and less costly to prevent disaster risks than to manage such risks when they occur. He called for an inclusive disaster risk prevention and management approach in order to get community buy-in. The Director General, who argued that it is impossible to achieve a sustainable risk reduction without the active participation of communities, emphasised the need for NEMA and other relevant agencies to prioritise communities in both resource allocation and capacity building efforts.



The beneficiaries (in front row), R-L (behind): Ag HoD, Dr Gbarakoro, R/S House of Assembly Chairman Committee on Education, Hon Ahiakwo, Mrs. Looloo, Profs Babatunde, Hart, Drs Komi and Alagah

Six students of the Department of Animal and Environmental Biology (AEB) have been awarded a scholarship by the Chairman, House Committee on Education, Rivers State House of Assembly, Hon Christian Ahiakwo and the Chief Executive Officer of Giolee Global Resources Limited, Mr Leesi Maol. The scholarship which was a fulfilment of a promise made by the duo during the Year One orientation exercise organised by the Department for the U2017 students, was awarded to six of the students with the highest Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) in the Department. The beneficiaries are: Osisi Upadhi Solomon (U2017/5550082) with 4.82 CGPA; Okeka Humble

Six AEB Students Get Scholarship for Academic Excellence

By Sunny Dada

Anayo (U2017/5550077) CGPA 4.63; Ebah Bernice Ogheneruese (U2017/500033) CGPA 4.57; Ebenezer Chinelo Grace (U2017/5550001) CGPA 4.50; Oba Onisotoyin (U2017/5550003) CGPA 4.50; and Wome Princess Abomma (U2017/5550133) CGPA 4.41.

The scholarship which is valued at one million, eighty thousand naira (N1, 080, 000) will cover the charges of the beneficiaries for the entire four-year duration of their programme at the rate of N45,000 per session. The award which took place during the Oral Presentation of Students' Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) was held on Tuesday, October 12, 2021, at the AEB Auditorium.

Presenting the cheques to the beneficiaries, the sponsors stated that the objective of the scholarship was to encourage the culture of hard-work and productivity amongst students. Hon Ahiakwo who was one of the sponsors, also promised to

work with students with the worst academic record in order to identify and resolve whatever challenges they may be going through.

On his part, the CEO Giolee Global Resources Ltd, who was represented by his Manager, Mrs Denebari Looloo, said that Giolee was honoured to partner the Department in the promotion of academic excellence. He stated that it was due to Giolee's commitment to academic excellence that the organisation made it a duty to always accept students from the University of Port Harcourt for industrial training.

In his remark, the Acting Head of Department, Dr Tambeke Gbarakoro expressed appreciation to the sponsors of the scholarship for their philanthropic gestures. Describing the event as historic, Dr Gbarakoro commended the beneficiaries for their commitment to studies which qualified them to benefit from the scheme. He urged them to continue to make the Department proud.

Ex-Students Donate to Dept

By Otikor Samuel

Two outgoing students of the recently demerged Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, Faculty of Agriculture, Solomon Mark and Nte Ineme-Awaji, have donated some items to their Department. Mr Mark donated a 6,700 KVA Firman generator, while his colleague, Mr Ineme-Awaji provided a set of First Aid Box with some drugs and three pieces of Quartz Wall Clock. Speaking in a brief ceremony before the items were unveiled in her office on Friday, November 5, 2021, the Acting Head of Department, Dr Mercy Ndubueze-Ogaraku, lauded the students for the donation. She stated that the items were supplied to the Department at a very critical time. "We are so pleased with the donation. The items are coming at a time when we need them most. This is because, the generator we use as back-up to public power supply has been overused. We have been spending so much for its repair. So, this donation is a rescue. We also need a First Aid Box for emergency purpose and of course, the wall clocks will not only give aesthetic to our offices, but as we all know, here is an academic



Acting HoD, Dr Ndubueze-Ogaraku (3rd right) flanked on her right by Ineme-Awaji, Mark, Prof Ekunwe, Dr Chima and her left by Mrs Agorom and Mr Nwokugha with the items

environment and we are time-conscious in whatever things we do," the Acting Head of Department said. Other staff of the Department comprising Professor Peter Ekunwe, Dr Uche Chima, Mr Samuel Nwokugha and Mrs Charity Agorom, also joined the Acting Head of Department to heap encomiums on the students for the donation.

Annual Thanksgiving Holds Dec 8

The Annual Thanksgiving Service of the University holds on Wednesday, December 8, 2021. A statement made available by the Vice Chairman of the Organising Committee, Professor Emmanuel Emasealu, enjoined members of the University Community to attend at the Convocation Arena, University Park. Time is 10:00am

Scholars Brainstorm on COVID-19 Challenges

By Otikor Samuel

Communication scholars and other critical stakeholders within and outside the University of Port Harcourt, have ended a four-day conference to chart pathways on how to use effective communication and language to address the COVID-19 pandemic challenges.

The conference which was organised by the Journalism Educators Foundation in conjunction with the Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies and the new Faculty of Communication and Media Studies held between Tuesday, 2 and Friday, 5 November, 2021. It has "Communication, Language and Coping with COVID-19 in the 21st Century" as its theme.

In his speech at the opening ceremony of the biennial conference which held at the Ebitimi Banigo Auditorium on Wednesday, November 3, 2021, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Owunari Georgewill, commended the organisers for putting together what he described as an important conference aimed at sharing knowledge and ideas on surviving the threats posed by COVID-19 pandemic through effective use of language and communication strategies. "We all have in the past one year had to struggle to cope with the ravages and threats of the

COVID-19 pandemic and its gruesome impact on lives, destinies, learning, communication, business, international trade and relations and indeed every facet of human life on planet earth. That is why this conference on coping with the pandemic is a unique one for us. This is because we shall be addressing how we can through effective use of language and communication strategies survive the COVID-19 pandemic," the Vice Chancellor said.

In his keynote address, Professor Peter Esuh of the University of Uyo, who spoke on the theme of the conference, stated that language is the vehicle for communication. He pointed out that the right language must be used to convey the right information on the spread of the pandemic.

Professor Esuh identified infodemic, misinformation and conspiracy theory as concepts that could interfere with the authenticity of news when there is an outbreak of a pandemic. "When the right information about a pandemic is hoarded, then we could fall into the trap of infodemic, misinformation or conspiracy theory," the keynote speaker said.

Professor Alice Nte presented the Lead Paper on the topic: "Caring for Children with Communication Disorders in the COVID-19



VC, Prof Georgewill (3rd left) and some Communication Scholars at the opening ceremony

Era." She stressed the need for parents and guardians to care for children, especially children with communication disorder in the face of the rising cases of the pandemic.

In his welcome address, Chairman, Journalism Educators Foundation, Professor Aniefiok Udouo promised that publications would be made from the conference, just as it was done in previous conferences. Professor Udouo, who is also the Head, Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies, disclosed that the event would also be used to honour some academics in the Department who have retired from the University. Those honoured were: Professor Shirley Yul-Ifode, Dr Charles Jenewari and Dr Hyacinth Orlu-Orlu.

Chairman, Local Organising Committee, Dr Faustinus Nwachukwu also welcomed conferees on behalf of the Committee, wishing participants a fruitful conference. Acting Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Professor John Yeseibo and Interim Dean of the new Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Professor Walter Ihejirika were represented at the conference.

RCBBR Ends 3-Days Training for Stakeholders

By Sunny Dada



Resource Persons, trainees and others

The Regional Centre for Biotechnology and Bioresources Research has ended its three days' training organised for molecular biologists and other bio-resources professionals across the country. The training which took place on November 1-3, 2021 at the Centre's Molecular Biology Lab, was attended by Lecturers, Postgraduate Students, Laboratory Scientists, and industry professionals, drawn from Bayelsa, Benue, Cross River, Delta, Edo,

Enugu, and Rivers States, amongst others.

Speaking on the objectives of the training, the Centre Director, Professor Anthony Ataga, informed *UniPort News* that the training was to avail participants with latest research techniques on agriculture, environmental and genetic diseases. While lamenting the dearth of research in the aforementioned areas in Nigeria, Professor Ataga stated that participants were trained to interpret results,

sequences and detect genes responsible for certain functions.

The training which was also designed to publicise the services offered at the Centre, was facilitated by Dr Nkechi Ogorji, Dr Victor Ezeburu and Mrs Preye Tari-Ukata. Some of the services offered at the Centre include: DNA Extraction, DNA Quantification, Plant Tissue Culture, Metagenomics, DNA Sequencing and Genomics, Screening for Genetic Diseases, and Microbiology.

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