Senator Sekibo Donates Books to RSUST

Victor G. Banigo

Senator George Thompson Sekibo has donated some books which he authored to the Rivers State University of Science and Technology.

The books donated include: “Nigeria: An Emerging Solid Minerals Economy”, “Beyond Measure: An Autobiography of Senator George Thompson Sekibo”, “When Tomorrow Comes”, “Anything is Possible” and “Inside the Chambers: A primary guide to the workings of the National Assembly”.

He expressed regret that his tenure as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the bank, Professor Adolphus Toby, noted that when the board took over in January 2015, it found out that since 1994 the bank was established, it had not been declaring dividend and was operating without a budget. He said that the practice was not healthy for the bank and its investors because it discouraged more investment in the bank which consequently affected its growth.

Nkpolu Microfinance Bank Declares Dividend

Victor G. Banigo & Jesse Okedi

Investors in the Nkpolu Microfinance Bank of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt, can now smile to the banks after every financial year and get return on their investment, following declaration of dividends by the bank for the 2014 financial year.

Presenting a cheque of 3.6 million naira to the Management of RSUST on Thursday 4 February 2016, being dividend to its major shareholder, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the bank, Professor Adolphus Toby, notied that when the board took over in January 2015, it found out that since 1994 the bank was established, it had not been declaring dividend and was operating without a budget. He said that the practice was not healthy for the bank and its investors because it discouraged more investment in the bank which consequently affected its growth.

He noted that with the dividend declared by the bank for the first time since its establishment, the bank has been repositioned on the path of growth. He assured the Board of Directors that the Management of the University will support them and ensure that the bank continues to grow and attract more investors.

Prof. Didia on behalf of the Management announced an increase of the University’s shareholding by 400 per cent. He directed the acting Bursar of the University, Mr. Kennedy S. Abraham to use the 3.6 million naira dividend and open an account with the bank, adding that all Faculties should also open account with the bank.

The Chairman of the board used the medium to request for a plot of land where other banks are located in the University campus, to build a permanent structure for the Microfinance Bank. He explained that the proposed structure will enable the bank compete with other banks on campus and also translate into a State Microfinance Bank.
other graduates on board Nigerian Registered vessels to gain sea experience. He said that such measure would also minimize the skill gap in the maritime industry.

"Glimmer implementation failure of the Cabotage Act can be attributed to the inadequate fleet capacity on indigenous ship owners, dearth of experienced seafarers, the predominance of foreign interests (especially as it concerns services to the oil and gas sector) regardless of the enforcement of the Nigerian (Local) Content Act. The prospect of training and employment of indigenes as seafarers is expected to be safe guarded by the Cabotage Act and the Nigerian Content Development Law", he said.

Prof. Bob-Manuel also urged Government to invest in boat building/ship repair and vigorously enforce the Nigerian content policy in ship/boat building and repairs in the country. "Collaboration between maritime training institutions and industry in research, should be intensified so that the country can meet the challenges of current and future technology", he said.
He also charged indigenous ship owners to adopt new technology so that their vessel can comply with current and up-coming regulations. "The maritime industry in Nigeria is growing but it is currently faced with insecurity, piracy, illegal bunkering, marine pollution, wrecks; etc. Adaptation of advanced technology will be required to alleviate some of these threats and crimes. Nigeria can be self-sufficient in energy when fossil fuel becomes extinct if massive commercial agriculture of rapeseed, milk-seed, sugarcane and other non-edible crops are cultivated to produce renewable/alternative fuels", he stressed.

The acting Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia, in his remarks, tasked other scholars to continue to carry out research and provide real solutions to societal problems regardless of their area of specialization. He argued that the excuse of lack of encouragement from government and modern equipment for research were not enough reason for scholars to relax and do nothing about the problems plaguing the society. He particularly noted that the research findings of the inaugural lecturer on the ways to escape mishap on the sea by boat drivers was commendable.

He commended the lecturer for his contribution to the academic field which had earned him national and international recognition. He said that the University had achieved another land mark with the presentation of the 38th inaugural lecture series.

Collaboration between maritime training institutions and industry in research, should be intensified so that the country can meet the challenges of current and future technology.
By Jesse Okedi

Persons of African descent have been charged to provide effective and proactive leadership and avoid ‘office insanity cum corporate double-speak’ in all spheres of society for the good of the continent and humanity in general.

This was the assertion of Seth Accra-Jaja, a Professor of Management in the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Npulu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt, while delivering the 37th Inaugural Lecture series of the University titled “Breaking the Management Coconut: Do You see Crumbling Pillars or an Ark?”, at the Amphitheatre, on Wednesday, September 30, 2015. He noted the more African managers continue to pay lip service to corporate co-existence, the more the managers would run rings around the neck of their subordinates. He opined that the African manager was “saddled with crisis of confidence, copycat syndrome, wobbling degree of freedom of action, formation of cult of strategic thinkers and floating gimmicks within and without the African work environment”.

Prof. Accra-Jaja theorized that the concept of coconut in the description of a personality had been misconstrued to mean something bad whereas, in the western world, the thinking was different. “Little wonder a manager identified as having a coconut head in the western culture is perceived and classified as one who applies approved philosophies in the course of discharging his managerial obligations… Like the African-Ibo proverb, the manager with coconut head (isi-aku), means a man lacking in philosophy in his actions”, he said.

He pointed out some factors triggering unethical managerial conscience in the workplace to include “the undue struggle for balancing work and family relations, poor internal communication, inappropriateness of work hours, workload, perceived tribalized management support, neglect in recognizing achievement and undue organizational politics”. He also said that the provision of insufficient resources for the workplace played a greater role in the efficiency of the workers and the effectiveness of the organization.

He therefore urged African managers to encourage the free expression of
controversial and dissenting viewpoints and streamline the organization’s grievance procedure so that problems receive fair hearing. “Never trust the people you cheat with because someday, they will throw you under the carpet”, he concluded.

The acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia, in his remarks, pointed out that the University’s Professors would present more inaugural lectures in the near future because the number so far presented was not enough compared to the number of professors in the University. He averred that management might consider allowing the lectures to come on bi-monthly basis in order to accommodate more lecturers. He explained that inaugural lecture presentation was part of the ritual in the appointment of a professor, an initiation of the appointed professor into the professorial club.

Prof. Didia described the inaugural lecturer as a fearless erudite scholar who has told the University that there was work to do. He congratulated Prof. Accra-Jaja and said he had learnt a lot from the lecture. He also urged all present to make the lecture monograph their companion. “We shall build an ark and will not let the pillars crumble on us”, he snapped.

In a vote of thanks, the Chairman of the University’s Senate Lectures Committee, Prof. Ikemefuna K. E. Ekweozor, thanked God for a bright weather, thanking all present for making the occasion a memorable one. Prof. Accra-Jaja later presented the lecture monograph to the acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia.

Prof. Seth Accra-Jaja’s lecture is the second to be presented from the department of Management after the first presentation by Prof. Bedford Fubara in February, 1996.
Prof. Chioma Carol Opara of the Institute of Foundation Studies has advocated for the establishment of a Centre for Gender Studies in the Rivers State University of Science and Technology.

Prof. Opara made the call while delivering the 39th Inaugural Lecture series of the University on the topic “Towards Integration in Heterogeneity: Poetics, Conflict and Gender Politics in Literature”.

Delivering her 60-page lecture, Prof. Opara observed that gender is both psychological state of humans and political status, explaining that the subject involves the discussion about socio-cultural roles and relates to the male and female sexes.

“It is noteworthy that gender encompasses both masculine and feminine and not just the female... Research in Gender issues should be promoted rather than dismissed as second rate or inferior to mainstream discipline. Accordingly, a Centre for Gender Studies should be established in this University...”, she said.

Prof. Opara who was the Director of the Institute of Foundation Studies (IFS), also recommended that IFS be elevated to a Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, adding that all students in the University should be made to enroll for English Language for four semesters and Literature for two semesters.

She stressed that the continuous learning of English Language will assist students improve in their speaking and writing; charging them to always consult their dictionaries for the meaning and pronunciation of new words. She warned them against spending long hours watching home videos, stating that some of the videos use Nigerian English rather than the Standard British English.

The Professor of English and Comparative Literature charged her audience to avoid the use of some popular Nigerian English like “My wife has put to bed”, “Her mother is late”, “The Manager is not on seat”, “Do you want to ease yourself?”, “Tonye dropped the phone on her” and “They were in the beer parlour”.

According to Prof. Opara, the standard British English should be “My wife has been delivered of a baby”, “Her mother is deceased/dead”, “The Manager is not in the office”, “Do you want to relieve yourself?” “Tonye hung up on her” and “They were in the pub”.

In his remarks, the acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia lauded Prof. Opara for her lecture, describing it as one that was well researched.

Prof. Didia noted that inaugural lecture provides the platform for professors to tell the world what they have been researching, stating that a professor is not complete until that professor delivers his/her inaugural lecture.

Prof. Opara’s inaugural lecture delivered on Wednesday 27 January 2016 at the Faculty of Law Auditorium is the 39th in the series of inaugural lectures in the University.
Professor Confidence Kinikanwo Wachukwu has invented a process for the production of biogas from domestic wastes, which he described as “UST Gas”.

Prof. Wachukwu unveiled the UST Gas production process while delivering the 40th Inaugural Lecture series of the University on the topic “Microorganisms: Providing Solutions to some Food and Environmental Challenges”, held on Wednesday 24 February 2016 at the institution’s Law Auditorium.

The study was intended to achieve two things; first, to see if we can use kitchen wastes to produce cooking gas (biogas) and secondly, to harness the greenhouse gases like methane and carbon dioxide that lurk in the atmosphere, so as to mitigate or reduce climate change or global warming”, he said.

He said that he embarked on this research after reviewing the health and environmental challenges posed on the ecosystem from wastes and how they are disposed. He stated that his over 10 years research is aimed at providing solution to this environmental issue by developing a process that will transform domestic wastes into biogas.

“The study was intended to achieve two things; first, to see if we can use kitchen wastes to produce cooking gas (biogas) and secondly, to harness the greenhouse gases like methane and carbon dioxide that lurk in the atmosphere, so as to mitigate or reduce climate change or global warming”, he said.

Prof. Wachukwu who is currently serving in the Governing Council of the Rivers State College of Arts and Science, said the UST Gas which happens to be his brainchild is cheap to produce and affordable, stating that the product is now being used in some labs of the Medical Laboratory Science Department. He assured his audience that with adequate funding and collaboration with other researchers working around the production of biogas, the UST Gas will be produced in large quantity.

He recommended for a concerted effort by the State governments in the South-South region to consider the construction of “a good sanitary land.
The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Didia speaking at the 40th Inaugural Lecture of the University

fill site” for the disposal and management of waste. He warned that the idea of dumping wastes on the road pose a security threat, noting that explosives may be dumped on such roads in the disguise of wastes.

In his remarks, the acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia eulogized Professor Wachukwu for his thought-provoking lecture, observing that his study has proffered solutions to some environmental issues. He expressed worries that most inventions designed by astute academics were not patented to secure the inventor's right of ownership.

While commending the inaugural lecturer for his concise presentation, the acting Vice-Chancellor described him as a hard working scholar, who did not allow his teaching and headship role in the department of Medical Laboratory Science to discourage him from completing his extended scientific research. He called on other professors who are yet to deliver their inaugural lecture to emulate Prof. Wachukwu, stating that research is the basis of scholarship.
The Advancement and Linkages Centre of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, has commenced its Breakfast Academy for collaborative learning, problem solving and action.

The Director of the Centre, Akpezi Ogbuigwe, who made the revelation at the Centre’s Inaugural lecture series titled “How Africa can feed itself: Lessons from Songhai Farms”, on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, held at the Vice Chancellor’ seminar room, said that the Breakfast Academy was contrived to put participants at the leading edge of information economy and solution generation. She said that the Breakfast Academy was a platform for innovative and practical lessons on how to solve real problems.

"The UST Breakfast Academy is a customized training for solution generation. It is learning made easy for the busy, a skill transfer from the best in just two hours. We are out to solve real problems with the required practical and actionable solutions. We bring in the best minds, people who have solved a specific problem and have proved themselves. We also show case the research finding of our lecturers in specific areas of society. On the Breakfast table, people acquire skills for nation building, problem solving and innovation. We compress a lifetime lesson into a three hour practical session for result orientation. It is an innovation hub where you learn to reach a goal in practical ways”, she said.

Prof. Ogbuigwe said that the Centre was the brainchild of the acting Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia, whom according to her, was desirous of connecting the University with the outside world for innovation, science and technology and nation building. “We are poised to connect the University to the outside world through collaborations and partnerships”, she snapped.

In his address, the acting Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia, welcomed the guests to the lecture, urging the participants to make good use of the session. “We must come together to move things forward especially in the area of Agriculture. This is just a humble beginning of what we intend to do. Our Faculty of Agriculture will be repositioned to meet the challenges of the time”, he said.

Prof. Didia also urged the Rivers State Government to reconsider giving back the Onne Campus land to the University to enable the Faculty of Agriculture carry out more research for the benefit of society. “Human beings are with senses not to quarrel but to work. What we are tackling now is a sense of belonging and a sense to reposition ourselves to work in the way that the state and the country will recognize that we are here. We are arriving there and by God’s grace we shall arrive there”, he said.

Also, the Commissioner for Agriculture in Rivers State, Barr. (Mrs.) Onimim Jacks, lauded the Centre for organizing the lecture, describing the topic as intriguing. She said that the Government was already thinking of how Rivers State can feed itself because food security was important. She also hinted that the government had plans to establish a school of practical agriculture. “I am impressed by the effort of RSUST Management on the Farms and Faculty of Agriculture. I believe firmly in the town/gown relationship. All training of the ministry will be done by the University and we are going to set up a school of practical agriculture."

"
In his lecture, Prof. Godfrey Nzamujo, noted that building the capacity of Africa's Human Resource was important in getting results. “We have been exporting wealth and importing poverty. To fight poverty, majority of our people should be active and efficient producers. Business as usual is no longer a viable option. We must adopt new approach to the problems of today with new attitude and mindset. Arable land is decreasing while the human population is increasing. We must look for means of feeding the vast population and technology is the way to go”, he said.

Prof. Nzamujo, who is the founder of the Songhai Farms in Benin Republic, noted that the purpose of agriculture was for healthy living, healthy ageing and disease prevention. He pointed out that the Songhai farm was a system that eliminates waste. He said that everything in agriculture is useful.

The lecture was concluded with a question and answer session where a panel of experts was set to tackle the numerous questions from the participants.
Prof. Didia while expressing delight over the encomiums showered on him by the students, attributed the glory to God, noting that he derives joy when people are happy and that his administration is committed to making students happy.

He assured the Postgraduate students that the Management will continue to follow the academic calendar approved by the Senate of the University, stressing that an 18-month programme should not exceed 18 months. He however charged the students to be serious with their studies as not to keep themselves beyond the prescribed time for their programmes.

The acting Vice-Chancellor reiterated Management’s position that it will not be involved in choosing students’ leaders, urging the Mr. Jolly led-administration to ensure a smooth transition to the next set of leaders when they complete their tenure.

On her part, the Registrar of the University, Mrs. Daba Constance Odimabo expressed gratitude to the association for finding the acting Vice-Chancellor worthy of such Meritorious Service Award. She called on the students to continue to be good students and always put on their ID cards as to assist the security personnel on campus identify them as real students.

Mr. Jolly lauded Prof. Didia for reducing the default charge for school fees payment for the Postgraduate students from 200% to 40% appealing that the management should also consider removing the 40%.

The President solicited for the construction of a Postgraduate Research Centre and more hostels for the Postgraduate students. He also appealed for the naming of the road leading to the Postgraduate Hostel as “PG Avenue”.

Responding, the acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia thanked the Postgraduate Students’ Association for the award, noting that he was highly

Postgraduate Students Association Presents Meritorious Service Award to Prof. Didia

Victor G. Banigo

The Postgraduate Students’ Association of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt has presented a Meritorious Service Award to Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia as a performing acting Vice-Chancellor.

Presenting the award plaque to the acting Vice-Chancellor on 17 February 2016, the President of the Association, Mr. Karibo Tammy Jolly said the Meritorious Award to Prof. Didia was informed by the achievements recorded within seven months in office as acting Vice-Chancellor.

Mr. Jolly lauded Prof. Didia for reducing the default charge for school fees payment for the Postgraduate students from 200% to 40% appealing that the management should also consider removing the 40%.

The President solicited for the construction of a Postgraduate Research Centre and more hostels for the Postgraduate students. He also appealed for the naming of the road leading to the Postgraduate Hostel as “PG Avenue”.

Responding, the acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia thanked the Postgraduate Students’ Association for the award, noting that he was highly
Niger Delta Youth Forum Applauds Prof. Didia

Ruth Atsu & Moses N. Obuh

The Ag. Vice-Chancellor of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia has been given an Award of Honour by the Niger Delta Youth Forum in recognition of his selfless services and his giant strides towards youth development while applauding his uncommon Transformation Agenda.

Prof. Didia was also nominated as the Grand Patron of the Forum on the grounds of his Active guidance and consistent support for youth development. The award was presented to him by the President of the Niger Delta Youth Forum, Comrade Emmanuel E. Good-head.

In his address Comrade Good-head said the forum is a Non-Governmental Organization in the Niger Delta Region and cuts across the Nine Niger Delta States in the country adding that they have been following the achievements and giant strides of the Ag. Vice-Chancellor since his assumption of office in August 2015. He said they were proud of him and sees him as a gift and a true father to all Niger Delta Youths.

Prof. Didia while responding thanked them for the honor bestowed on him. He said in the emancipation of the Niger Delta Youth many have gone, he encouraged them to continually stand as one and shun all vices that can tarnish the image of their Association adding that he was proud of them for blazing the trail adding that whatever he has achieved since his assumption of office is with the support of his management team and it is for the good of Niger Delta at large. He thanked them for their visit and promised to support the growth of the association.

Comrade Good-head further added that they have been following the achievements of the Ag. Vice-Chancellor and said they know that he will surpass the expectations of his supporters, they also used the opportunity to congratulate The Visitor and Governor of Rivers State, His Excellency, Barrister Ezebunwo Nyesom Wike for appointing a seasoned and trusted son of Rivers State as the Ag. Vice-Chancellor of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology.

The award ceremony was witnessed by some Management staff of the University.

Charkins Maritime Donates 3 Computers To Department of Marine Engineering

Victor G. Banigo

Charkin Maritime, an offshore training company has donated three computer sets to the Department of Marine Engineering.

Presenting the computer sets to the Management of the University on 10 March 2016 at the Vice-Chancellor’s Conference Room, Charkins’ Chief Executive Officer, Sir Charles K. Wami said the donation was part of the company’s Corporate Social Responsibility to the University which is accommodating their head office.

Sir Charles said that Charkins was established in the University in 2002 with the aim of enhancing the professional aspect of the maritime training, adding that some students who have been trained by them are now working in reputable oil and gas companies.

He assured the Management that they will continue to train students interested in offshore maritime. He also said that they will soon collaborate with the University to establish a Diploma and degree programme in Maritime studies.

Sir Charles used the forum to announce an increase from N20,000 to N30,000 of his Chair for the Best Graduating Student in Marine Engineering.

Responding, the acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia expressed gratitude to Charkins Maritime for the donation.

Prof. Didia said that since he took over as acting Vice-Chancellor in August 2015, Charkins Maritime is the first organization residing in the University to make a donation, stating that the gesture will improve mutual relationship between the company and the University.
The Special Assistant to the acting Vice Chancellor of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Mr. Sydney C. Enyindah, has tasked journalists to be fair and objective in the reportage of issues in the University and the country at large.

Mr. Enyindah who doubles as the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the University, came out with this when Grassroots Journalists of Rivers State visited him in his office. He said that objective reportage of issues was necessary to save society from the tyranny of misinformation. “My advice is that you should be objective in your reportage. If there are issues that are not clear to you and you require some clarification, feel free to contact us because there is always a second side to every story. The doors of the University are always open,” he said.

The SAVC/PRO who also received a gold award of excellence from the group, thanked them for the gesture. He dedicated the award to the acting Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia whom he described as a game changer. “I dedicate this award to my Vice Chancellor for giving me the opportunity to supervise the Public Relations Unit. I want to thank him very much that within a short time of his being at the helm of affairs, he has put smiles on the faces of staff of the University. I call him the game changer because of his passion for the well-being and welfare of staff of the University”, he said.

He noted that the acting Vice Chancellor had in three months achieved a feat that could not be achieved in the past eight years; by reconciling all aggrieved parties in the University. He revealed that most cases against the University were being settled out of court for the growth and development of the University. “It is on record that this University had gone through turmoil. You will recall that Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) embarked on industrial action for more than three years but today, we do not have such issues again. I can assure you that with the effort of the acting Vice Chancellor so far, we are going to see a better University than we had in the past”, he said.

Earlier, the President of the Grassroots Journalists of Rivers State, Mr. Jeff Oguike, explained that the award was in recognition of Mr. Sydney Enyindah’s forthrightness and commitment to duty. He noted that the group had observed visible changes within the short time he had supervised the Public Relations Unit of the University. “Our job as journalists is not only to pick out the ills of society but reinforce those areas that are good. We are pleased to reveal that you were chosen for the award after careful consideration of your activities as the Public Relations Officer of this University. We will urge you to keep the flag flying because we are watching”, he said.

Mr. Oguike who led other members of the body for the visit, particularly noted that the good image of the University had been on the rise since the current management team was put in place. He pointed out that the resolution of the Management/ ASUU face-off was commendable considering the amount of time journalists in Rivers State had put into it in terms of investigation and reports. He pledged the commitment of the group to upholding the ideals of professionalism in practice of journalism. “We are professionals in our field and will continue to remain so in the discharge of our duties”, he snapped.
The Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt is set to host the Chemical Society of Nigeria (CSN) Annual International Conference, which will go down into history as the second International Conference of the society hosted in Rivers State.

Briefing the acting Vice-Chancellor of the University on Thursday 18 February 2016 during a courtesy visit, the National President of CSN, Prof. Gloria U. Obuzor, said the first International Conference held in Rivers State was in 1994 and that she was glad that the State’s chapter of the Society is willing to host the conference again, proposing to use RSUST for the conference.

The CSN President who is also a Professor in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Port Harcourt, assured the acting Vice-Chancellor that RSUST will benefit from hosting the Conference, as the technical session will enhance the human capacity of Chemists in RSUST.

She said the Conference tagged “Garden City 2016” will take place from 18 to 23 of September 2016 with the theme “The Roles of Hydrocarbon and the Application of Chemistry in Energy Innovations”. She also said that the sub-themes of the Conference will focus on areas such as the diversification of resources in the oil and gas sector, Chemistry Education, Green Chemistry, Biofuels and Bioenergy amongst others.

Prof. Obuzor also said that part of the activities for the Conference would include the Annual National Chemistry Competition for Secondary Schools, where the best student will be offered scholarship for first degree.

She used the forum to congratulate Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia on his appointment as acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, praying that soon he will be made substantive Vice-Chancellor of the enviable premier University.

In his remarks, the acting Vice-Chancellor of RSUST, Professor Blessing Chimezie Didia assured the Chemical Society of Nigeria that the University is willing to host the International Conference, promising that the Management of the institution under his leadership will contribute towards the success of the Conference.