

## FSTC Principal Promises to Surpass Previous Achievements

Uchechukwu Nnaife

The Principal of the Federal Science and Technical College (FSTC), Yaba, Lagos, Rev. Chris Ugorji, has promised to build on last year and previous years' achievements in his continued quest to make the school one of the best in the country. The principal, who listed some of the feats recorded by the students last year while briefing journalists in Lagos, recently, promised better performance this year with the support of the staff, students and parents.

In the area of academics, he said the school emerged the overall first position in the 2016 National Business and Technical Education Board (NABTEB) external examination results.

This he said was revealed at the annual general meeting (AGM) of all principals of the 104 unity colleges, in Iyo last December, where analyses of the results of various subjects were made. For achieving the feat, he said the school received a merit award and 42 certificates, presented by the Minister of State for Education, Prof. Anthony Anwukah.

He said the school also won seven out of the nine awards in the 2016 Africa Future Trust Model United Nations (TAFMUN) programme, an affiliate of United Nations designed to replicate the United Nations General Assembly. The head girl of the school, Oluchi Nwachukwu, who emerged the overall winner, won a free Lufthansa Airline ticket to attend the International Conference in New York in March.

According to him, the school came first and second consecutively in Nigeria, in the Cisco Netriders ICT Africa competition, which was organised for all institutions, including tertiary institutions across Africa. Students of the school won awards like Top Achievement Certificate from CISCO International. The school came first in Nigeria, West Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa; and fourth in the whole of Africa.

"FSTC Yaba also received recognition award as the Best CISCO Networking Academy with the highest number of students graduated in West and Central Africa at the 2016 ASC UNITES CISCO. Our Lead Instructor, Miss Christine Ekezie emerged the Best Instructor and received awards and was nominated to attend

the CISCO Summit in Germany with all bills paid."

Ugorji said a student of the school, Miss Chineye Ibeneme, also came first in the 2016 edition of the Terry Maxwell Book Review Project, where the book 'Weep Not Child' by Ngugi wa Thiong'o was reviewed. She received the star prize of a laptop and cash prize.

The school was not left out in the area of sports, as it emerged the overall winner (boys' category) winning the highest number of medals in the December, 2016 Federal Government Colleges Games held in Enugu State.

The highlight of the game was when Ibrahim Shokunbi (5,000m), Okubadejo Joshua (200m), Adesanya Ayodeji (100m) out ran the other students in the various races. While commending the teachers for their commitment towards grooming the students for better outcome, the principal thanked the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for its support, which it demonstrated by completing a 1,200 capacity female hostel within a year to alleviate the problem of accommodation at the school.



## The Importance of Water

Rainwater is one of the natural sources of water that man enjoys. A favorite treat for many children and young adults, particularly in rural areas of developing countries, is to bathe in torrential rainfall. The 'pitter patter' of our children's feet and the unison in their voices chanting Nigeria's cultural rain-songs and rhymes to herald rain can be so uplifting. Adulations cast on rain because of its benefits to agriculture and to virtually every function of daily living is very common in the tropical parts of Africa where rain is abundant in its season. To very temperate countries and climates, snow is another natural source of water. In winter, everyone exalts the exquisite whiteness and purity of snow. So when the rains come during the rainy season in Nigeria, to Nigeria with her on-going problem of insufficient pipe-borne water, many homes open their vats to quickly collect nature's inexpensive blessing, rain. They fill their drums hastily knowing that they would save money on privately sourcing for water from "Mai ruwa" or water-tanker for another three to four months. Rain water is used for washing, bathing, cleaning and drinking.

It is also a common feature in Africa, as you well know, to find individuals with head pans or jerry-cans looking for water under the surface of the earth. Underground water is another natural source of water. Wells, springs, oases, bore-holes, water tables and water hidden in the pore spaces of the soil, water present in the fractures of rock formations all fall into this category. Furthermore, a vast majority of people all over the world rely on waters above the ground such as: rivers, lakes, ponds and of course the oceans of the world. Their waters are used among other things, for drinking, bathing, washing, cooking, transporting, for irrigation and other agricultural tasks, and indeed for living.

If you rely a lot on rainwater, you might want to give a thought to the purity or naturalness bequeathed on it. You might well be right that people who regularly drink rainwater are likely to have built-up their defenses against infections. It might also be reasonable to hold that rain water that is collected from raised and unpopulated places are cleaner. Although rainwater is a natural and inexpensive source of water, it might not be completely pure. Progressive rural development and developments in many towns and cities of developing countries may contribute to this. Automobiles, increasing population of people, growth of offices and industries, give off high concentrations of pollutants into the atmosphere.

As it falls to the ground, rainwater may trap and dissolve contaminants like: soil, soot, dust particles, parasites, viruses, bacteria, algae, rodent and bird faeces on roofs, roofing and piping materials like asbestos and lead, insects' parts and animal hair. It may also absorb some carbon dioxide, Sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and radioactive materials. Therefore it is wise to carefully collect and handle rainwater so as to lessen its risk of coming in contact with harmful contaminants. If collected in sterile to clean conditions, some people may then consider it safe to drink rainwater without it being boiled. It is however important to note that boiling your rainwater may remove the germs but not the chemicals. Whichever way you look at it, carefully handling the water you drink and prepare the food you eat with is of utmost importance especially if you have a weakened immune system.

Omoru writes from the UK

## Students Set to Protest Fees Hike in Ogun

A coalition of students' organisations under of Save TASUED and Fund Education Coalition (STAFEC) has concluded plan to stage a mass protest in Abeokuta, Ogun State on February 6, against what it described as the continued neglect of education, especially the tertiary education sub-sector in the state.

The group comprises Tai Solarin Students' Union; National Universities Education Students' Association (NUESA); Alliance of Nigerian Students against Neoliberal Attacks (ANSA), among others.

In a statement signed by Sanni Ramon, Ewetola AbdulRamon, Sanyaolu Juwon, and Tomi Aina on behalf of Tai Solarin Students' Union, NUESA, ANSA and Students' and Youth Activists Support Initiative, respectively, they condemned the fee hike in Tai Solarin University of Education and other higher institutions in the state.

The statement read in parts: "The Save TASUED and Fund

Education Coalition (STAFEC) wishes to seize this medium to inform the mass of the Nigerian populace its resolve to stage a mass action against the anti-student/anti-poor policies of the Governor Ibikunle Amosun-led government of Ogun State on February 6, 2017.

"The mass action is aimed at showing our displeasure towards the premeditated neglect of public education especially TASUED. We take exception to the illegal and arbitrary tax of N10,000 imposed on students and we reject in totality, the increment in acceptance fee from N30,000 to N40,000.

"The coalition maintains an outright rejection of the introduction of N25,000 registration fee; we consider it as fraudulent, thoughtless and unacceptable especially at the time the same students and their unpaid parents barely manage to pay the exorbitant N76,500 school fees, astronomical acceptance fee and many other ridiculous charges."



The Delta State Commissioner for Basic Education, Chiedu Ebie (middle) with the MD/CEO, Midwestern Oil and Gas Company Ltd, Charles Odita (right), unveiling the newly built blocks of classrooms in Utagba-Ogbe Grammar School, Kwale... recently

## Midwestern Oil, Gas Donates Classrooms to Community

As part of its corporate social responsibility initiative, Midwestern Oil and Gas, in collaboration with SunTrust Oil Company Limited, recently built and donated blocks of 12 classrooms to Utagba-Ogbe Grammar School, Kwale, Delta State.

Utagba-Ogbe, Kwale is one of the host communities where Midwestern Oil and Gas has been operating for the past eight years. Every year, the company executes major and significant people-oriented projects in the host communities.

It had built and equipped a modern hospital ward at the Kwale General hospital, which it handed over to the

hospital's management board, last year; it also tarred and expanded a major street in the community.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony recently, the Managing Director of Midwestern Oil and Gas, Mr. Charles Odita, an engineer, said the classroom project is in pursuit of the company's commitment to contributing to the socio-economic development of its host communities via improved access to education among other things. Odita said the company constructed the 12 classrooms using the services of two indigenous contractors while all materials and labour were also sourced from the community.

While commending the company for maintaining a running cordial relationship with its host community, the state Commissioner for Basic Education, Mr. Chiedu Ebie, noted that the responsible disposition of the oil and gas company has helped to grow the economy of the surrounding communities.

Also present at the ceremony were the Oduosa of Utagba-Ogbe kingdom; HRM IPO Obi; members of Umusadege Community Accredited Contact-Men Committee (CACC); chief inspectors of education of Delta State; the principal and vice-principal of the school, among other stakeholders.

## British Council Partners Ekiti Federal Varsity on Capacity Building

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti

The British Council (Nigeria) has indicated its willingness to partner the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) in the area of capacity building for staff and students through scholarships and grants for the growth of the young institution.

The council's Director of Higher Education, Skills and Enterprise, Adetomi Soyinka, who made this known in Lagos during a visit by FUOYE delegation, assured the visitors of the council's readiness to partner the institution in all positive ramifications.

Soyinka said the council works in

conjunction with several other organisations through which grants or scholarships/fellowships can be accessed for staff and students, adding that in a couple of weeks, the council will hold the Nigerian higher education dialogue in Abuja and extended the invitation to FUOYE.

She revealed that the dialogue will cover topics like Curriculum Reform: A Catalyst for Change; Should Higher Education Design be Employer Led?; Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Impact on Nation Building; as well as NUC'S Cross Border Higher Education Guidelines, a Tool for Inter Civilizing

Nigeria's Higher Education.

Also speaking, the council's Programme Manager on Higher

Education, Sephora Imomoh, said the council will support the institution in its desire to emerge as a world class institution, adding that it will ensure a smooth linkage between FUOYE and numerous sources of grants or any form of assistance that could be required.

The delegation from FUOYE was led by the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the university's Governing Council, Professor Saida Mabadeje, accompanied by some council members, as well as some principal officers including the