



3522

Special Release

10 March, 2015

## **OBITUARY**

### **PROFESSOR DAVID EHIGIE OSIFO (26 June, 1933 – 22 February, 2015)**

The Vice Chancellor, Professor I. F. Adewole, FAS, announces the transition of Professor David Ehigie Osifo, whose sad event occurred on Sunday, 22 February, 2015.

He was born in Benin City on 26 June, 1933 to Pa James Osakwe Osifo, a timber contractor and grandson of Oba Eresoyen of the Benin Kingdom, and Mrs. Edesogie Osifo (nee Edobor). He started school early at ICC Benin, and then passed the Entrance Examination into the highly competitive Saint Patrick's College Asaba (SPC), where he made many life-long friends. On graduation from SPC, he passed the Entrance Examination to the University of London, Ibadan Campus where he studied Agriculture. He went on to complete his PhD degree in Industrial Economics at the University of Manchester, England.

Late Professor Osifo refused an appointment at the University of Manchester in 1968, and returned to Nigeria to contribute to the building of the country as a Research Fellow at the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER). While at NISER, he steered his research activities towards Industrial Economics because he felt that was the key to Nigeria's economic growth and development. During the early part of his career, he published extensively on the Economics of the Rice Industry and Sugar Industry.

Based on his interest in Engineering Economics and Management, he decided to pursue further training in this area. He obtained an AMP from Harvard University in 1971. A believer in academic excellence, he continued to pursue further knowledge at World Class Universities: UCLA and Stanford, where he underwent further studies for a Post-Doctoral Programme in Industrial Engineering with focus on Engineering Management. On completing the post-doctoral programme, he

moved to the Faculty of Technology, Department of Agricultural Engineering and Forestry Engineering in 1976 as the Acting Head of the Department.

In 1981, he set up the first Department of Engineering Management and Industrial Engineering in Sub-Saharan Africa based at the Faculty of Technology, University of Ibadan. Since then, the University has produced many eminent alumni across the world including several academics in Nigeria and USA as well as many Managing Directors of Industrial Organizations within the country. Professor Osifo endowed

an Annual Prize for the best graduating student with a 1st Class Honours degree in Industrial Engineering in his lifetime.

Late Professor Osifo was also a Founding Fellow of the Nigeria Institute of Industrial Engineers. In many ways, Professor Osifo is regarded as the Father of Industrial Engineering in Nigeria. He organized the first Conference on Industrial Engineering as well as Engineering Management of Water Supply Systems in the country. He published several papers in International Journals in his field and a book “The Role of Technology in the Industrial Development of Nigeria” which is available in several countries including 27 University Libraries in the United States of America. Several of Professor Osifo’s views on Industrial and Technology development are still pertinent, as Nigeria struggles to meet its Industrial and technological goals.

He was invited as a Foundation Professor and Rector at Bendel State University, Ekpoma (Now Ambrose Alli University) to set up the College of Engineering and Technology. Professor Osifo’s enthusiasm and dynamism was evident as he was also given the responsibility to set up a second College – College of Environmental Design. He succeeded in setting up both colleges, attracting international and local faculty members to join the programmes. It provided him an opportunity to help build the capacity of the country to produce engineering, architectural, building and other professionals that could catalyze the Nigerian Industrial Revolution. After retiring from BENSU in 1988, he offered his time voluntarily to lecture at the Department of Industrial Engineering, University of Ibadan. He taught Advanced Engineering Economics, Engineering Organisation and Management and Engineering Management between 1990 and 2002.

Late Professor Osifo was also active in non-academic activities; he was a Director of the New Nigeria Bank, helping to start-up the London branch in 1980. He served as a Consultant to UNIDO and other Nigeria establishments such as the Bacita Sugar Industry and old Mid-West State of Nigeria.

Prof. David Osifo is survived by his wife of over 50 years, Prof. Bola Olufunke Osifo, his children and their spouses, grandchildren, siblings, nephews and nieces. He will be missed by his family, friends, students and colleagues.

May his gentle soul rest in peace. Amen.

Burial arrangements are as announced by the family.

**[END]**