GREAT IFE – MORE THAN WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD; OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES GOLDEN JUBILEE ANNIVERSARY IN STYLE

Our great alma mater rolled out drums to celebrate its 50th anniversary. The celebration, a cocktail of fanfare, ran through the first week of November. The line-up of activities started with a press conference on November 5 where Prof Bamitale Omole, the 10th Vice Chancellor, OAU noted that since inception, the university has graduated 81,212 degree holders and the institution had fulfilled some of the dreams of its founders.

“As at now, the university has produced from among its academia a Nobel Laureate, and six Nigerian National Merit Award winners. Our students have also excelled in national and international competitions. We believe our founding fathers have left unparalleled legacy for us and we are endeavouring to keep the flag flying – the university landscape, which epitomises this, is being improved upon and all abandoned projects are being completed. OAU has been acclaimed the most beautiful campus in Africa and fifth best place in real estate in the world.”

Prof Bamitale Omole (Vice Chancellor, OAU) (TELL November 26, 2012 page 55)

On November 6, the second day, the anniversary was marked via a carnival road show. The carnival kicked off at the Sports Center Main bowl. It was a kaleidoscope of the culture and entertainment of the institution which was displayed by both staff and students.

As part of the anniversary celebration, novelty matches were played. The first match was between the male staff of the university and their female counterpart - a mismatch off sorts. The second match was a friendly football match between the university football teams of OAU and University of Ibadan (UI). The match ended 1-1 with UI scoring the first goal through penalty in the first half and OAU equalizing in the second half through a penalty also.

The highpoint of the week was the avenue for the university management, staff, students and alumni to rub minds intellectually during the anniversary lecture with held on the November 8 at Oduduwa hall under the distinguished chairmanship of Chief Arthur Mbanefo, a former Nigerian ambassador to the United Nations. The anniversary lecture titled – Possessors At The Gates – was delivered by the guest speaker, Dr Christopher Kolade (CON), pro-Chancellor, PAN-African University, Lagos.

Dr Kolade started his lecture by noting that every individual stood at different gates of opportunities and that the whole of the life of a human being could be seen as a string of opportunities for doing things that helped to fulfill life purposes. He further stated that everyone seem to stand at different gates either because we need to pass through the gate in order to reach an opportunity, or because we are responsible for manning the gate so as to provide access for other people.

“...establish or manage educational institutions may be seen as gatekeepers of the opportunity for other people to gain the benefits of education; and those who come seeking access to education are seen as stakeholders of the situation, doing their best to pass through the gates and take advantage of what lies beyond...”
He devoted time to congratulate OAU for sustaining a credible effort to live up to its appellation ‘Great Ife’ saying no one could miss or ignore the real respect the institution and its alumni enjoyed among highly reputable communities of scholars around the world.

“as we all know very well, it is one thing to start out as a great institution, it is quite another thing to remain great, considering the changes and chances that the environment may throw up at different points in time. Indeed I hold the view that many of the institutions that were the pride of Nigeria 50 years ago are no longer holding their own. Many have succumbed to the pressures of irresistible forces over the years. On this occasion, we must congratulate Obafemi Awolowo University, not only for still being here at 50 but more importantly for sustaining a credible effort to live up to its preferred appellation.”

During his speech, Dr Kolade made a call for strengthening university autonomy – i.e. possessor of academic freedom-, which would provide the platform from which decisions that would lead to success could be taken. He said that the universities must have considerable autonomy in deciding the courses to teach, researches to pursue and the level of quality and achievement that will be recognizable and acknowledged in the university system.

He further admonished the leadership of the country, as possessors of the gates of the country, to come away from the culture of secrecy in treatment of corruption offenders. He also stressed that leaders should adhere strictly to the laws of the land and the codes of practices that had been instituted in governance and in the professions.

In concluding his speech, Dr Kolade advised OAU to create programmes in leadership studies and persuade the possessors at the gates to take advantage of such programmes in preparing elected office holders for competent ownership of their responsibility.

The week ended with a music night on November 10, where Lagbaja was the lead artiste. At the music fiesta, professors, members of the higher echelon of the school’s management and students traded their academic paraphernalia for their dancing shoes.

The anniversary celebration culminated in an anniversary dinner/fundraising event which held on December 11 at Hotel and Suits, Victoria Island Lagos where eminent alumni and past Vice Chancellors were treated to a fantastic dinner. Some of the guests present were Prof Bamitale Omole (the current VC), Prof Wale Omole (7th VC, OAU) and Prof Michael Faborode(9th VC, OAU). Some of the prominent alumni present included Dr (Mrs) Fayemi (wife of Ekiti State Governor), Dr Olusegun Mimiko (Governor of Ondo state) and Dele Momodu (the Publisher of Ovation magazine). The VC at the dinner solicited the support of the University alumni. He encouraged them to continue to support the university in its activities and projects which include

- Procurement of teaching and research equipment
- Construction of lecture theatre complex for first year students, laboratory buildings and faculty of science dean’s office
- Construction of 2 500-seater lecture theaters at the permanent site of environmental design and management building
- Construction of senate building (Jubilee House)
- Special intervention of sports facilities for NUGA games hosting and further development of the stadium complex.

The alumni secretariat on behalf of the Provost, staff, students and alumni congratulates Prof Bamitale Omole, the Vice Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University, staff and students of GREAT IFE on its 50 memorable years of adding value to lives.

HAPPY GOLDEN JUBILEE.
NEWS FLASH

a. DONATIONS BY ALUMNI
   Dr Subair donated N150,000 towards the tiling of the floor of the Department of Community Health Departmental office in December 2012.

b. PROMOTION AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALUMNI
   The alumni secretariat on behalf of the staff, students and alumni of the College of Health Sciences, use this opportunity to congratulate eminent alumni who have attained great achievements in the chosen path in life. We congratulate
   - Governor Olusegun Mimiko for his re-election for 2nd term as the Governor of Ondo State.
   - Dr Tope Oladele on his recent appointment as the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Health, Osun State.
   - Dr Abiola Michael Okunlola on his recent promotion to a Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Ibadan.
   - Prof Folasade Ogunsola (Nee Mabogunje) on her inaugural lecture on 17th October, 2012 titled “Battle of the Titans: Can man win the war on microbes?” which held at University of Lagos. She is currently a Professor of Clinical Microbiology at the College of Medicine, University of Lagos.
   - Honourable Wale Okediran who gave the 2012 Bola Ige Memorial lecture at the NUJ Hall, Iyaganku, Ibadan on December 24, 2012. The title of the lecture was “The Challenges of Political Leadership in Ibadan”. The occasion was chaired by Prof Akin Mabogunje.

c. OBITUARIES
   - Late Prof Vincent Ifeanyichukwu Ugboko (1964 – 2012); BSc, MB.Ch.D, FMCDS, FWACS
     Prof V. I. Ugboko until his death was a Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon, Faculty of Dentistry, Obafemi Awolowo University - his Alma mater where he graduated in 1987 – and an internationally recognized oral/maxillofacial surgeon. Prof Ugboko was an amiable man who had an innate and sincere desire to help. He was a hard working, diligent, highly productive teacher and clinician who pursued excellence and wanted everyone to know and find the route to excellence in all they do. He was also a very generous and humble man, and a leader with exceptional leadership qualities. He impacted our world positively as testified to by friends, colleagues, mentees, students and patients that he lived a life worthy of emulation.
     Adieu, an astute Clinician, a great Teacher, Mentor and Friend.

   - Late Dr Samuel Oluremi Olateju (1956 – 2012); BSc, MB.Ch.B, FMCOphth, FWACS, MRC Ophth, FICO
     Dr Olateju until his sudden demise from a road traffic accident on October 6, 2012 was a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Surgery, Obafemi Awolowo University and a Consultant Ophthalmologist to Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital (OAUTHC). He was a living proof of how fine a person can be – sincere, earnest and loyal. He was a highly intelligent and vibrant individual with a rare friendliness and charm of personality. Dr Olateju graduated in 1981 with B.Sc (Health Sciences) and later obtained an MB.Ch.B in 1986. He later came back to Ile-Ife in 1990 to start residency in Ophthalmology. He was a Fellow of the West African Surgeons in Ophthalmology and National Post-Graduate Medical College. He was also a member of the Royal College of Ophthalmologist, UK. He had a lot of awards to his credits - European Economic Commission Fellowship, International Council of Ophthalmology Fellowship to mention a few.
     As a Consultant Ophthalmologist he worked with passion, integrity and energy. He was a strategic thinker, a visionary who was brilliant, innovative, and creative, always willing to share his ideas and information. He gave energy, commitment and inspiration to his staff, patients, and students. He was a committed and lovely family man. An outstanding virtue in Dr Olateju’s life was reaching out to the less privileged and the needy – denying himself severally to pursue this course. He was a genuine warm and wonderful individual – one we will miss greatly.

   - Late Prof E. Ade Caxton – Martins
     A foundation staff of the College of Health Sciences and Professor of anatomy died on the 23rd of December, 2012. He will be fondly remembered as a great teacher who served the College with passion and impacted students’ life for several decades.
PICTURE FLASH: UNIVERSITY’S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

A) PRESS CONFERENCE

Cross-section of staff and press men at the press conference

The Vice Chancellor, Prof Bamitale Omole answering questions after the press conference

B) ROAD SHOW CARNIVAL

Cross-section of staff and students during the road show carnival

The VC (2nd on the right) and the DVC – admin (1st on the left) being entertained by a student during the carnival

The carnival entourage walking towards the University main gate.

VC – Prof Bamitale Omole (5th from the right), his wife – Mrs Omole (4th from the right), DVC admin – Dr Ajayi (3rd from the right) and his wife – Mrs Ajayi (2nd from the right) taking a picture with a royally clothed horse and his rider during the road show carnival.
C) NOVELTY MATCHES

Vice Chancellor, Prof Bamitale Omole, kicking off the novelty matches

D) ANNIVERSARY LECTURE

Chief Arthur Mbanefo, Chairman of the occasion (1st on the left) congratulating the guest speaker Dr Christopher Kolade in the presence of the VC, Prof Bamitale Omole

Cross-section of the audience at the lecture

From the left: Oba Kadejo, Osemawe of Ondo and Prof Bamitale Omole after the lecture

E) ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The ushers at the dinner

Prof Wale Omole (7th OAU VC) giving a speech during the dinner

Prof Bamitale Omole (current VC) giving a speech during the dinner

From left: Dr Olusegun Mimiko, Prof Bamitale Omole (current VC) and his wife, Mrs Omole.
SEASON GREETINGS

The alumni secretariat is wishing staff, students and alumni of the college of Health Sciences a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Alumni souvenirs can be gotten from the alumni office for Christmas gifts for loved ones

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