

## 4th Year in Office: University Community pours encomiums on Prof. Iwe

By Ubadire Agua



### Pro Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe VC MOUAAU

On March 1, 2025, members of the University (Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike) Community, from across various sections, took time out of their schedules to thank God and pour encomiums on the 6<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chancellor of the University,

Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe, CFS, as he marked his 4<sup>th</sup> year in Office.

Various social media platforms of staff of the University were agog with goodwill messages to the Vice-Chancellor, painting him with bright and beautiful colours,

and dressing him in very fitting apparel.

Not a few members of staff, including Dean of the Postgraduate School and Deans of Colleges; Director of Academic Planning and Directors of Directorates and Centres, Heads of Department and Units, etc., expressed their profound gratitude to God for the gift of the person of Prof. Iwe as the 6<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chancellor of the University. They commended his outstanding and exemplary leadership qualities and noted that they have helped to restore the good image of the University, and have also brought peace, stability as well as progress to the Institution.

The Dean of the Postgraduate School, Engr. Prof. Ogonnaya Inya Okoro, wrote "I congratulate the Vice-Chancellor on his 4<sup>th</sup> year in Office. We thank God for the credible leadership you have given the University these four years and the landmark basic infrastructural development witnessed in the

University since you assumed Office. May God uphold you as you continue in your service to Him and humanity".

Similarly, the Director of Academic Planning, Prof. Anthony A. Nlewadim, said "I say congratulations to our 6<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chancellor for the sacrifices he has made these 4 years for the growth and development of MOUAU. May God continue to bless you and grant you

good health to finish your tenure successfully".

In an appreciative response after reading all the goodwill messages, the Vice-Chancellor wrote on the Expanded Management Platform: "I wish to appreciate colleagues, Departments, Colleges, Centres and Directorates that have shown us solidarity on this platform and elsewhere for their support and

kind wishes. As we thank God for His grace thus far, let us guard our loins for a roll down through the remaining months, weeks, days, hours, minutes and seconds of this Administration. Let us close ranks to ensure that we seamlessly conclude it to the glory of God and to the blessing of MOUAU. I promise you my dedication and peaceful engagement in the months to come. Blessings to you all".

## VC recounts moments his appointment was announced, speaks of achievements, challenges so far

By PR Team



### Pro Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe VC MOUAU

Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe, CFS, says his emergence 4 years ago as the 6<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chancellor of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, was emotional in many respects, with some members of the Governing Council then describing his appointment an act of God.

Prof. Iwe disclosed this during an interview with MOUAU News while recounting the moments he was

announced as the 6<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chancellor of the University in December 2020.

According to the VC, "I think it was an emotional thing. People were happy that the appointment came through and I thank God that it came through because it has provided me an opportunity to express myself among my colleagues in this University".

Prof. Iwe spoke about his achievements and some of the challenges of the University which his administration is addressing.

Read the full interview below:

#### MOUAU News

**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 4<sup>TH</sup> YEAR IN OFFICE. PLEASE, RECOUNT THE FEELINGS WHEN YOU WERE ANNOUNCED THE 6<sup>TH</sup> VICE-CHANCELLOR OF MICHAEL OKPARA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, UMUDIKE?**

#### Vice-Chancellor:

I think it was an emotional thing for many people, even among the members of Council. It was very emotional when I got in where they were; some of them were almost in tears and apparently, that led to some of them to tell me few hours or days later, that it was God that appointed me a Vice-Chancellor and not any human being. So, I thank God the appointment eventually came. The feeling was good. Everywhere I went, people were happy that it came through and I was so happy too because it has given me the opportunity to express myself among my colleagues in this university.



MOUAU Public  
Relations



MOUAU  
Online



@mouauPR



## **MOUUAU News**

***YOU TOURED THE CAMPUS FROM DAY ONE YOU ASSUMED DUTY. WHY DID YOU ACTUALLY DO THAT AND WHAT WERE THE RESULTS YOU GOT FROM THE TOURS?***

There was also this issue of I belong to Peter and I belong to Paul. There were issues of hate and bite. There were issues of promotion and no promotion. The previous regime was accused of all manner of things that we were trying to handle. And of course, people were tired of the system. So, I needed to do a kind of needs assessment. I needed to get closer to the people and understand what they are saying and what they want.

It was also to build confidence in the System. I had to tell everyone to calm down and that I would find a way out of all the confusion. So, as a leader I needed to be in touch with both the people and the environment because for years I've been in the rooms working. I served 6 years as Dean, Student Affairs and 4 years as a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). So, I said it was time to get down to see exactly what the situations looked like. It really paid off because people are now making references to the things I said which I can't really remember, but which we have probably been able to address. Those are some of the reasons.

## **MOUUAU News**

***SO, WHAT DID YOU ACTUALLY SEE IN THE COLLEGES THAT YOU VISITED?***

### **Vice-Chancellor**

Just like I said, there were divisions amongst Staff. Some had lost hope. Remember that time, we had this problem of some kind of professors; what we call proper placement of

### **Vice-Chancellor**

Yes, remembering the background of the University at my entry would provide the clue



academic staff which was a major issue of which several people had gone on with litigations against the University. Then within the University, there were a lot of cries and hues. So, these were the things that I observed. Some didn't even believe in me as the Vice-Chancellor and as human being. Many of them were saying that "we don't see you doing anything or handling this matter. We don't see you contributing anything positive"; that I was part of the problem because I belonged to the former administration.

So, I am happy that today when we meet ourselves, the same people now say, Ah!, "we didn't know you were serious. We are happy that the promises you made, you have kept them". I am so happy about that. It shows that something has happened over the period.

to why I had to do that. The background was such that the University was in the state of confusion. People had lost hope in the University because of the things that happened prior to that time.

Of course, they were several physical infrastructural issues that needed to be handled by the time we moved round. We could place a few things that we did so that learning and research can be enhanced.

## **MOUUAU News**

***SIR, LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR DREAMS FOR THE UNIVERSITY. WHAT WAS IT THAT YOU REALLY HAD IN MIND FOR THE UNIVERSITY WHEN YOU ASSUMED DUTY?***

### **Vice-Chancellor**

There were a few things encapsulated in my vision which I presented to the Council before my appointment. First, I wanted to see a university that is contemporary; a university that is opened to the universality of universities, because for a long time, we had enclosed and shut-in ourselves. By the time I took over, this University had a very bad



**MOUUAU Public  
Relations**



**MOUUAU  
Online**



**@mouauPR**

image. The image was terrible in many things and many aspects, and this image was carried on over a period within my administration. Staff were not really helping matters. Many of them were not ready to work or do what they were expected to do. Even those in leadership positions were not coming forth to provide

confidence among themselves.

We needed a place where everyone feels a sense that this Community likes you, that this community wants you and that this Community needs you.

We needed a community where



leadership enough to challenge the gaps in the Units and Departments. We have not quite gone away from that, but we have made improvement from what we inherited.

We needed a university that could do some research because for many years we could not point at anywhere in this university where you can get a well-equipped laboratory to conduct research and experiments.

We needed a university that is relaxed because there were, more or less, tension everywhere as at that time. So, this could only be achieved by establishing some form of peace among us that would bring people to work together and then grow in

people would be opened to challenges, have peace and have the floor where they can express themselves.

Then, apart from the core issues of my vision, one of which is that this University will be an entrepreneurial agriculture University where there should be a kind of productivity, where there should be some products in the marketplace, where people can say: where is this product coming from; and they will say it is coming from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, which for a long time we didn't have. So, these were some of the things in my mind.

## **MOUUAU News**

***YOUR ADMINISTRATION HAS DEMONSTRATED SO MUCH PASSION, COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO THE PEACE AND PROGRESS OF THIS UNIVERSITY. PLEASE COULD YOU MENTION SOME OF THE THINGS YOU HAVE DONE SO FAR AS VICE-CHANCELLOR?***

### **Vice-Chancellor**

I have tried to establish a platform of prudence in the University. You must become prudent because we realized that we don't have the resources to run this University. Unfortunately, outside there, many people misunderstand what we do in the University System. I know that our University doesn't have funds. In fact, universities in Nigeria are not sponsored by industries, comparable to what is obtainable elsewhere. Many industries shy away from coming close to universities and that puts pressure on us.

People that advice government, wrongly advise them that there is what is called IGR in universities. Many of the Universities do not even have the machinery to generate fund. Unfortunately, within the last four and five years, global recession and inflation have made a mess of whatever is so called IGR.

You will recall I took over the leadership of this University shortly after the COVID 19 period in 2020. The next year, 2021 was supposed to be the year the world woke up again as though it was recreated. But it did not. So, throughout 2021, there was nothing like income. And then of course in 2022 when we thought we shall start building up, all the universities in



**MOUUAU Public Relations**



**MOUUAU Online**



**@mouauPR**



Nigeria shut down for almost one year. Again, there was no income. So, for almost 3 years, we have struggled, for no fault of ours.

The way people just say what they say and talk about things is baffling. 2023 came, it was a political year. And being an election year, nothing happened until the last quarter of



2023. So again, there was no productivity, no income. Now people stay in their offices to say this is the number of students they have, and they are generating IGR. What IGR? Students' charges can never be IGR. For instance, a student is issued with identity card which the University can put at N5,000 and the students pay the N5,000. You may even realize that this ID card is issued to the students at N4,500 or N6,000 as the case may be. So what comes out of it? In fact, just recently, we were discussing what these charges could be called. So, it is just ordinary institutional charge taken from students to be able to serve them. That's service charge. It can't be IGR. That's where people get it wrong. Because of the limited resources the

nation has, nation cannot provide all the resources for running the universities from day to day.

We thank God that the nation bears the personnel cost but that is just the bit of what is required. For instance, we need not less than 150 million naira per month to run this University. Presently, we buy 33,000 litres of diesel a month. We pay the cleaners that clean the University close to 25 million naira every month. Then we pay around 10 million to 20 million naira monthly to EEDC that provides supplementary power to us. There are other expenses in running the Departments and Units.

So, when you add up all these things, you are getting up to N120million to N130million or N150million. That money does not come from anywhere apart from the students' charges and if you don't give the students water and light for one moment, then you pay for it heavily. That is the major area we are contending with.

There is little money that government brings as overhead but that money cannot even buy one modern computer. So, that is the scenario. If I must buy one computer for every Department and other consumables, pay one charge or the other, then how do you meet up? That's the situation.

So, the major issue is how to comfortably fund the system which we have not found solution to yet. Except things begin to settle down and be sorted out, we shall

continue in the circle. Even after the COVID 19 lockdown, we have situation where every year costs keep increasing and we can't stop the cost from rising. So, except something is done economically globally and of course nationally, we shall continue to have the problems we are having in the system.

## MOUAU News

**SIR, DESPITE THESE CHALLENGES, YOU HAVE ACHIEVED A LOT AND THAT IS WHY YOU MENTIONED THE ISSUE OF PRUDENCE AS ONE THING YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH. WHAT OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS HAS YOUR ADMINISTRATION RECORDED SO FAR?**

## Vice-Chancellor

Yes, I started by establishing prudence in the system. That's why when we came in, we had to introduce E-Senate because we knew that the major area of spending in the Registry is the production of Senate materials, because you have to have bundles of papers for every member of the Senate. So, we had to bring down the cost of Senate sittings as well as other similar meetings.

Another one was to fix possible inflow areas for which we were lacking at that time. Yes, the University established the Micro Finance Bank many years ago but at a point, we had problem. The University established a Limited Liability Company which people call Consultancy in other universities, and it was not functioning for 15 years. The University also had a Petrol Station which was down for many years. We had to find ways and fixed these facilities to ensure they start working again.



**MOUAU Public Relations**



**MOUAU Online**



**@mouauPR**



We had a TETFund project which were for bread-making and other facilities which were down for many years. We also found ways and fixed them and started picking up small money to make the so-called IGR. Even if we don't have liquid cash, we now have a situation where these things project the image of the University. We have our bread and bottled water written Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike on them. These things give us a measure of confidence and add to our image

There are other things we have been able to do to bring some kind of life to the University. When I came in, a number of our staff had litigations against the University. There were these issues of this type of professor and that type of professor and things like that was on as at the time I came in, but today, you don't hear about them. It was through some dint of hard work that we have been able to resolve things among ourselves. We virtually don't have any case in court with any staff as it is now, maybe there

are just a few, and everybody is happy for the ways things are going on. Some people that felt disenfranchised with the position as professors and all that, have been sorted out. We have been able to resolve those things quietly and they are happy. Almost everybody that had any issue with professorship have been sorted out.

Everybody is back to work. I think that is one of the things that makes me so happy. Even if I didn't do any other thing, we have achieved a level of peace and a level of confidence among our Staff that had issues at a point in the University.

**MOUAU News**  
**COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE MOVEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY TO THE PERMANENT SITE AND WHAT IS GOING ON OVER THERE?**

Vice-Chancellor

It is one of those things that was at the back of my mind, when I

assumed office. I was here when Prof. Onwudike (second Vice-Chancellor of the University) was surveying the University land and mapping out areas of the University. I remember I followed him in some instances to know the location and the demarcation of the University. For me, it wasn't running well with me that after many years the University doesn't have enough space to operate on. In fact, the space that we are occupying here is less than 10 percent of the total space for the University. Of course, I had two things in mind: One, we must pursue the expansion of the University that was also contained in a Visitation Panel Report and two, pursue the Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) of the University. I thank God that we have gone far with these two.

I need to mention, that before I came in, my predecessor had an intervention fund that was coming in about the time I was coming in and that intervention fund was for the building of blocks in the Permanent Site. That fund helped me also to have a focus as far as the Permanent Site was concerned. That was why immediately the fund was received, I ensured it was deployed for the Permanent Site in Olori and started work there.

A few buildings are coming up at Olori. The Senate building has gone far and hopefully before the year ends, it might be completed and made ready for use. And then, other Registry, Bursary and other facilities that are coming up in the Permanent site. So that's the way it is going.

On the Certificate of Occupancy, we are almost there. The Abia State Governor has graciously signed the document and he's ready to release it to



**MOUAU Public Relations**



**MOUAU Online**



**@mouauPR**





like what we have here.

### **MOUUAU News**

***SIR, YOU ARE NOW IN THE LAST LAP OF YOUR ADMINISTRATION. WHAT ACTUALLY DO YOU WISH YOURSELF AND THE UNIVERSITY AS YOU GO TOWARDS THE END OF YOUR TENURE?***

### **Vice-Chancellor**

Well, the tenure is a kind of relay race. You run to a point; you hand over a baton. When 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 comes, I mean about this time next year, I will say goodbye and hand over the baton to another person. I expect you to keep the faith and keep the peace

in my absence. I pray that others coming in, will do better than I have done so that the University will remain at peaceful and keep being productive.

### **MOUUAU News**

Thank you very much, Sir, for your time. We wish you a successful completion

### **Vice-Chancellor**

Thank you.

us anytime from now. With that we are confident that the land which measures about 6,000 hectares belong to the University and we have already set our feet there by establishing the Senate building just



**L-R: Ginger Eke, Dr. Ubadire Agua, VC, Prof. Iwe, Sunday Okorie, Joy Nlebedum ght)**



**MOUUAU Public Relations**



**MOUUAU Online**



**@mouauPR**