

## **A BRIEF CITATION ON NTUFAM DR. ITAFU JOE OKEY.**

Dr. Itafu Joe Okey was born some 62 years ago in Abidjang in Etung Local Government Area of Cross River State. He attended the prestigious Mary Knoll College, Okuku-Ogoja from 1956 to 1960 and passed the WASCE in Division one. Thereafter he enrolled in St. Patarick's College Ikot Ansa, Calabar for his A-levels and cleared the three papers in one sitting in 1962. Dr. Okey taught briefly at Mary Knoll College before proceeding to West Germany where he had his basic and postgraduate medical training between 1965 and 1978 at the free University of West Berlin (1965-1972 and University of Essen Teaching Hospital 1974-1978 where he specialized in Anaesthesia and Intensive care medicine. While in Germany, Dr. Okey took time off to study Acupuncture and auriculo therapy in Vienna, Austria, exploiting the synergy of Acupuncture and Anesthesia to tremendous advantage in his practice. Infact Dr. Okey found the practical combination of general and acupuncture anesthesia/analgesia for Open Heart Surgery very challenging.

## **POSITIONS HELD.**

Dr. Okey held several distinguished positions in Germany as Specialist and Consultant Anaesthetist before returning to Nigeria in December, 1980. In 1981, he was appointed senior consultant at St. Margaret's Hospital, which later metamorphosed to the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital. He was simultaneously appointed Senior Lecturer and first Head of Department of Anesthesia at the University of Calabar. Dr. Okey held both positions till 1986 when he resigned to set up his practice. He is currently the Medical Director and Paroprietor of Canaan Medical Centre, Calabar.

## **MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES.**

1. Fellow of the German Society of Anaesthesiologists.
2. FFARCS (Germany)
3. Fellow of the Nigerian society of Anaesthetist.
4. Canaan Society of Anaesthetists (An Award of Excellence).
5. Fellow of the Association of General Medical Practitioners of Nigeria.

He was in 1991 a top contender in the CRS Gubernatorial race under the platform of Nrc and could only be stopped through massive rigging.

In 1992 Dr. Okey contested the Nigerian Presidential Race of option A4 under NRC also. Dr. Okey served as 3X commissioner in the Cross River State Executive Council and held the portfolios of Agriculture, Water Resources, Health and Social Services between February 1994 and December 1996. In these portfolios Dr Okey acquitted himself creditably.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS: Dr. Okey**

1. Negotiated and signed the famous \$116 million African Development Bank Loan for Cross River Water Board in Abidjan, Ivory Coast in 1994. That today pure potable water runs in our taps in Calabar, it is to Dr Okey's credit.
2. Negotiated the 36 million Deutch Mark German Grant for Ikom Water scheme in 1994.
3. Introduced the very viable small holder scheme for Cross River State Cocoa Estates in 1995, today cocoa is the only surviving agroallied industry.
4. Spear-headed the Federal Government take over of the Cross River State Psychiatric Hospital Calabar and signed on behalf of the state Government in 1995.
5. Renegotiated the suspended World Bank Assistance to Cross River State Essential Drugs Program and got a Drawdown of \$ 5 million within 9 months for the scheme.
6. Virtually single-handedly got Etung Local Government Area carved out of Ikom L.G.A.
7. As Chairman Board of Management of the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hosital, Abeokuta, Dr. Okey was acknowledged by the current serving Honourable Min. of Health, Prof Eyitayo Lambo, as the best performing Board Chairman under the Health ministry in 2004.
8. Dr. Okey started the 54kilimeters Okuni-Okoroba – Eakang road projecte in Etung Local Government Area in 1995 – which today has been perfected by the Donald Duke's Administration.
9. Dr Okey was a former Chairman Cross River Hotels Ltd between 1984 and 1986.
10. Dr. Okey was the immediate past member of council of the Federal University of Technology, Yola.
11. He was also a one time Chairman Cross River State Property Development and investments Ltd. Calabar in 1993.
12. Dr Okey is a foundation member of PD and is a pillar in the Government of today.