

PRESENTATION BY KUNLE AJAO, EARTH SCIENTIST, CHEVRON NIGERIA LIMITED ON “PRACTICAL STRATEGIES/INITIATIVES FOR INDUSTRY-TO-ACADEMIC TEACHING SUPPORT” DURING THE 2013 NAPE-UAP LEADERSHIP FORUM

- **Prof Isaac Folorunso Adewole, MB BS, FMCOG, FWACS, Vice Chancellor, University of Ibadan**
- **Prof. Isaac F. Adewale, The Chairman of this occasion,**
- **Prof Julius Okojie, Chairman, presentation section,**
- **Mr. George Osahon, President, NAPE**
- **My fellow respected speakers**
- **NAPE-UAP coordinators**
- **Distinguished ladies and gentlemen.**

The Vice Chancellor, University of Ibadan, Professor Folorunso Adewole; Chairman of this forum, Professor Isaac Adewale; Chairman, NAPE-UAP Presentation Section, Professor Julius Okojie; the President of NAPE, Mr. George Osahon, distinguished members of NAPE, ladies and Gentlemen. I am honored by this rare opportunity to make a presentation before this distinguished audience. I sincerely thank NAPE and the organizers of this lecture for the privilege given to me to share my experience with others at this forum.

My presentation was borne out of close interactions with university communities as a volunteer and by invitation to teach and carry out geosciences career exposition to graduate students in University of Lagos (UNILAG) in the last five years, and Obafemi Awolowo University (O.A.U) in November 2012.

Academic world imparts classroom theoretical knowledge and fundamental principles in students. The knowledge will appear abstract, if there was no sufficient room for the application and acquisition of practical skill which is important in the oil and gas industry.

Five years after my postgraduate study and working in the industry, I had an insight of the big gap that exists between the petroleum industry and the academics. Some faculties recognize the gap and had at various times sought for collaboration from key industry players and oil companies to close those gaps. The supports have come in form of not only financially, but through volunteering teaching programs in the schools. In my own little way, I have been trying to reduce the gaps by volunteering to assist in practical teaching of 3D seismic data interpretation on weekends at UNILAG.

Many companies support employees' volunteering teaching initiative in higher institutions by sponsoring and motivating their staff to participate in the program. At Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL), investment in educating the youths of Nigeria is paramount. Chevron is an Energy Company that gives priority to education and capacity building of Nigerians through various ways and supports. Voluntary teaching by employees at Nigerian universities has the backing of the company's top management. CNL also has

various scholarship schemes for qualified Nigerians and has been working with communities clusters known as Regional Development Committees to provide science laboratories, classroom books, books and skill acquisition initiatives for the people. The RDCs, which signed Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMOU) with the NNPC/Chevron Joint Venture and the government, have brought significant manpower development to their communities through the implementation of the agreement.

I will now talk on a few 'Practical strategies and initiatives for industry to academic teaching support' which is the topic for the day:

Why calling for (Justification for) practical education support?

There is a need for symbiotic relationship between the universities and the petroleum industry, as the **universities serve as kitchens for producing prospective industry workforce**. The collaboration will increase the opportunity of hiring qualified candidates from the universities who will become top flyers with the right mentoring in the oil and gas business.

The oil and gas industry supports the universities through donation of equipment, sponsorship of employees' volunteering teaching program and also **provide hands-on job opportunity** for students to experience the creative process and high-tech science that is the bedrock of the fast-growing and dynamic energy industry.

The worth and influence of the industry to the academic world is invaluable and very crucial **in seamless transition of college graduates into the industry**. The collaboration will no doubt promote geosciences training and advance the career prospect of geosciences students in Nigerian universities.

Challenges of Industry practical teaching aids to our schools

The challenges include **inadequate practical teaching materials** due to confidentiality of Geological and Geophysical (G&G) data such as Wire-line logs and Seismic data sets result in the use of synthesized data as oppose to working with actual G&G data set from the oil companies

Insufficient workstation machines or hardware and where they are available, there is unsustainable maintenance of air conditional units required for durability of the machines due to inadequate funding of the geosciences faculty in the university. Inadequate mapping software packages and funding of software licenses required for long time usage by the universities remain a challenge.

Inability of students to access websites of geosciences based professional societies' such as NAPE, AAPG, SPE and SEG as well as publications of their periodic meetings and workshops to sharpen their intellect.

Tight office work schedules of industry experts results in few volunteers because of office project deadlines, personal projects and family demands leaving them with very few times to spare. All applications and request to the industry must however be directed to their managing directors.

Volunteer transportation logistics to university campuses may also be an issue: The universities may be located in different towns or states, therefore all requests will require approval of the industry to provide time off, transportation and security escort for some of the volunteers.

Bureaucracy in approving one or two nights accommodation for volunteers whose offices are far from the universities may be a challenge too.

Forms or ways of practical educational supports from Industry to academics

Oil Companies should make **deliberate efforts to encourage industry volunteers** to provide periodic practical teaching support, and modalities could be worked out between the university and the company.

Industry internship program(Student Industrial work experience): Geosciences students will require a minimum of six months internship to boost their hands-on job knowledge. The duration of the internships need to be included in the academic curriculum of the universities and worked out with the industries.

Geological & Geophysical field trip: Geosciences practical skill set in class room/office is not complete without periodic rock outcrop studies by the geosciences trainees. Organizing and sponsoring of school geosciences field trips (rock outcrops studies) at the university annually is another means of direct educational collaboration between the companies and budding geoscientists. The field trips should be anchored by professional experts to complement limited geological field trips organized by the faculty. The field trips organized by the faculty are usually difficult to implement during the 4 to 5-years geoscience graduate program due to schools financial constraints.

Retired but not tired industry geoscience professional involvement: Industry expert retirees with an interest in teaching should be encouraged to impart their knowledge to the young geoscientists in our schools.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my employer, Chevron Nigeria Limited for its support to the education of Nigerian youths and NAPE for providing this forum. I will like to leave you with this question: where will the petroleum industry be in the future if universities turn out half-baked geoscientists because of lack of practical teaching supports from the industry?

Thanks for your attention.

Kunle Ajao