



SAVANNAH ENERGY

17TH TEACHERS' AND 7TH PRINCIPALS' AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

DATE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 01, 2024.
VENUE: WATBRIDGE HOTELS AND SUITES, UYO

ORDER OF EVENT

10:00am – 10:10am	Guests are Seated
10:10am – 10:20am	Safety Talk
10:20am – 10:30am	Chairman's Opening Remarks Mr. Nsikak Essien
10:30am – 10:55am	Welcome Address by Prof. Enobong Joshua
10:55am – 11:15am	Award Presentation 1 Teachers Award
11:15am – 11:25am	Remarks by Savannah Energy
11:25am – 11:45pm	Award Presentations 2 Grand Mentors Award
11:45pm – 12:25pm	Address by the Guest Speaker Mrs. Monica Lewis Head of Schools, Mobil Pegasus School, Eket
12:25pm – 12:40pm	Award Presentation 3 Principals Award
12:40 pm – 12:50pm	Brief Remarks by an Awardee
12:50pm – 1:00pm	Vote of Thanks

WELCOME ADDRESS AT THE
17TH TEACHERS' AND 7TH PRINCIPALS'
AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

HELD AT WATBRIDGE HOTELS AND SUITES, UYO, ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 01, 2024.

Protocol.

In the last 11 years, I have always welcomed you to this event in my capacity as the Chairman of the Screening and Award Committee. This year it is a bit different. I am also speaking to you as the Foundation's director/chief operating officer. I thank the Foundation's Board for finding me suitable for these onerous tasks and remain committed to working with other stakeholders to improve the education sector in Akwa Ibom State. In this regard, the Foundation is particularly grateful to the Management of Savannah Energy, an oil and gas company with whom we partner.

In tandem with the 2024 World Teachers' Day theme: *"Valuing teacher voices: Towards a new social contract for education,"* we are here today to demonstrate our value for our teachers who labour in the field to teach our children with great sacrifices. Their voices are often neither heard nor valued, except perhaps by their students or, in rare cases, by their former students. Our collective desire is that the government will take definite steps to address the shortage and improve the quality of these vital personnel in our public schools. A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instil a love for learning. This is why we cannot but commit to sustaining focus on teacher development, mentorship, and motivation for optimum results in our education enterprise.

For those who may not be familiar with our process, let me remind us that the main aims and objectives of the Foundation since 2007 are:

- Encourage teachers of Science, Mathematics, English language, and some other *endangered* subjects in our public secondary schools,
- Stimulate awareness for the study of these subjects,
- Promote healthy and positive competition for excellence among teachers,
- Help teachers to be more committed to their profession as they constantly update their knowledge and help mentor other colleagues and
- Provide mentorship opportunities for public secondary school students in Akwa Ibom State through volunteers from different professional backgrounds.

These objectives have led us to constantly appraise the education framework in Akwa Ibom State and proffer suggestions on infrastructure, curriculum development and personnel needs. In 2016 and 2019, the Foundation identified with the government's Education Summits. It was part of the Akwa Ibom State Think Tank Committee on Education, which produced a Roadmap for Education for 2020–2030. I have had opportunities to address various aspects of education delivery to school heads (primary and secondary) and community leaders in the State. Last year, after the inauguration of the current government, I was invited to lead a team of education stakeholders to design the education agenda for the State at the first Akwa Ibom Dialogue. This dialogue produced a workable framework with achievable timelines for all the sectors in the ARISE Agenda of this administration. Notable strategies in education include teacher recruitment, training and motivation, infrastructure revamping, and curriculum restructuring to meet the 21st-century needs

of education. We are hopeful that the government will set out to implement this framework fully to usher in a *golden* era in the educational development of the state.

The Award Process

The Foundation's Award is for 6 subjects: English Language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Economics. The first prize winner receives N250,000, the second N150,000, and the third N100,000.

The final screening test for selecting the winning teacher is in two parts. The first part is an aptitude test based on the WAEC/NECO curriculum. The second part is an oral interaction between the facilitators and, at most, 6 of those who pass reasonably well on the written test. To strengthen the value of the award, the first, second and third prizes can only be achieved if a contestant scores at least 70%, at least 60%, and at least 50%, respectively, in the tests.

150 teachers and 8 school principals applied for the screening and award exercise this year. However, only 104 teachers participated in the computer-based screening test, comprising 21 in English Language, 17 in Mathematics, 12 in Biology, 19 in Chemistry, 11 in Physics, and 7 in Economics. This response is low compared to 166 teachers in 2023. Disappointingly, these numbers are pretty small compared to the large number of English and Science teachers in the public secondary schools in the State.

In the **Grand Mentor Teachers' Award** category, the mentors must scale through the written test with a score of at least 50%, in addition to their field performance indices, before being considered for the award. Besides, at least one of their mentees should be a prize winner in the year. The Grand Mentor award attracts N500,000. This year, we have five (5) grand mentors each in English Language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

The **Principal's Award** came on board our stable in 2017 and is aimed at rewarding the efforts of exceptional public secondary school heads who have distinguished themselves in pushing their institutions' academic and administrative advancement by providing a congenial learning environment. The 8 principals who applied were visited and appraised using well-articulated administrative performance indices by the Foundation. However, only 6 turned up for the screening exercise and the oral interaction, after which *three* winners emerged.

Given the statistics above, I think it appropriate to pause and ask teachers and the education ministry officials why this is the case. Why are many teachers and principals unwilling to submit to this screening process?

The screening process and the written and oral interactions were handled with transparency and integrity according to established rules and procedures. The expert facilitators were carefully selected from the academia and the public sector, and we thank them for their commitment and integrity over the years. Today's winners will be duly presented with prizes at the appropriate time during this event.

Environmental Awareness, Quiz competitions, and Scholarship Award Programs are the most recent interventions in our education endeavours, fully sponsored by Savannah Energy. When fully developed, these will undoubtedly address specific deficits in our education pursuits and provide an avenue for proper care of our environment, beginning with schools.

Our Appreciation

It has been a long journey, and there's still a lot of work to be done. The Foundation, therefore, appreciates Savannah Energy's management and other sponsors for their partnership. We also appreciate our volunteers, mentors, and facilitators from the University of Uyo, including a retired permanent secretary, for their honest, diligent, and selfless contributions to the Foundation's project. The process is so transparent that we have witnessed no complaint of unethical conduct since inception. The Ministry of Education and State Secondary Education Board as well as Principals, are appreciated for granting us access to the schools.

Conclusion

Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one. Our teachers are, therefore, enjoined to brace up to create a new social contract in education as they devote their lives to this noble purpose. They must be determined to teach students diligently and conscientiously and aim to leave an indelible impression on their minds.

Students should pay attention to their studies and other worthwhile endeavours rather than being distracted by unnecessary indulgence in unhealthy and protracted social media preoccupations and certain vices. Students should develop a mindset that can help expand their horizons, sharpen their minds to creativity, and expose them to a promising future. Our Foundation provides student mentorship clinics facilitated by notable persons among us. Students can access this forum and become beneficial to themselves in future.

Earlier, I mentioned the several roles of the Foundation in supporting the Government's efforts at improving the education sector. Various reports are at the government's disposal, and we pray that these recommendations will be significantly implemented. Needless to reinvent the wheel.

Finally, as we congratulate the award winners on their success, they should realize that this is the beginning of a new journey in the mentorship of their colleagues. This award provides a springboard to numerous other opportunities ahead. Take these opportunities squarely, just as some of our teachers have done!

Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you to this event. Please relax and join the Foundation's noble and destiny-transforming agenda by adopting a school and/or sponsoring a subject or an event. Get involved!

Thank you, and may God bless everyone!

Professor Enobong Joshua
Chairman Award Committee/COO

2023 ANNUAL TEACHERS/SCHOLARSHIP AWARD





SAVANNAH ENERGY