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## Editorial

### A TRIBUTE IN HONOUR OF LATE PROFESSOR ELEAZAR UCHE IKONNE (1956 -2023)

*“What is the essence of life? To serve others and do good” ~Aristotle*

Prof. Eleazar Uche Ikonne was born on 15th August, 1956 in Agburuke Nsulu in Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria. He attended Ngwa High School Aba, Nigeria, Manila Central University, Philippines, and St. Jude College, Philippines where he obtained the West African School Certificate (WASC), Doctor of Optometry (OD) and Master of Hospital Administration (MHA) respectively.

Upon his return to Nigeria, he enrolled into the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme at Parklane General Hospital (now Enugu State University Teaching Hospital) Enugu, Nigeria which he meritoriously completed and was subsequently employed at the Imo State University, Okigwe (now Abia State University, Uturu) in 1986. In furtherance to his academic and professional pursuit, he obtained the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Environmental Health Sciences of Abia State University, Uturu and Fellowship of the Nigerian Postgraduate College of Optometrists (FNCO) in the specialty area of Primary Care Optometry. He was an Associate editor of the Journal of the Nigerian Optometric Association.

During his sterling career at Abia State University Uturu, Prof. Ikonne rose through the ranks to the status of a Professor and held the following administrative positions: Head of Department (1994-1997; 2001-2005), Director Institute of Distant Education (1998-1999), Ag. Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Deputy Provost, College of Medicine and Health Sciences (2009-2010), Deputy Vice Chancellor (2010-2014) and Vice Chancellor (2015-2020). During his tenure as Vice Chancellor of Abia State University Uturu, he successfully executed many landmark projects, among which are the procurement of the Optometry Building and state-of-the-art equipment for the Department of Optometry. Prior to his appointment as the 7th substantive Vice Chancellor of Abia State University Uturu, he served as Rector, Abia State Polytechnic, Aba where he brought his administrative skills to bear on resolving the numerous intractable challenges that confronted the institution (2008-2009).

In addition to the numerous positions he held within the university community, Prof. Ikonne was the Chairman Disciplinary Committee, Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Registration Board of Nigeria (ODROBN), Vice Chairman, ODORBN, Chairman, ODORBN (2018-2022), Registrar of the Nigerian Postgraduate College of Optometrists from inception to 2021 and President of the Nigerian Postgraduate College of Optometrists (2021-2022) which he co-founded with other reputable optometrists. He won various awards, among which are the African Optometric Educator Award of the Year (2003), Distinguished Merit Award of the Nigerian Optometric Association (2006), Eye-care Award (2007) and Fellow of the Nigerian Optometric Association (FNOA).

Prof. Eleazar Uchenna Ikonne was a colossus, an optometry icon and a trailblazer. He will be greatly missed by the optometry community in Nigeria and beyond. Adieu Prof, Adieu the great leader!!

**Dr. Obinna Awiaka, FNOA.**  
President, Nigerian Optometric Association.