Akaehomen Ibhadode

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Professor of Manufacturing Engineering, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria and Prize Winner of the 2010 Nigeria Prize for Science
Ph.D. Mechanical Engineering (1987)

I will always be attached to the University of Birmingham because it has been part of my career and achievements.

I came to the University of Birmingham, Edgbaston in September 1984 to do a Ph.D in Mechanical Engineering. Prior to my arrival, I was assigned to Dr. Trevor A. Dean, now Emeritus Professor of Manufacturing Engineering, as his research student. I went to work immediately after I arrived. He gave me loads of research papers to go through to familiarize myself with the work I was to do. Sometime in October or so, I, along with another of his students, Cihangir Tuncer, Turkish, attended a one-day conference of the British Drop Forging Association in Worcester. It was quite a wonderful experience in the presence of major players in the forging industry. Just before we went on Christmas break in 1984, our research group had a Christmas get-together in a Chinese restaurant. That was my first time of tasting Chinese cuisine. On Boxing Day evening, Professor Dean came to pick me up from Griffin Close where I stayed, to his boat house on the canal to have dinner with his family.

In my first year, I stayed at Griffin Close on Bristol Road, Northfield. My wife and our nine-month old daughter joined me in August 1985, and then lived at Augusta Road, Mosley. We stayed there till August 1986 when we moved to Griffin Close, and were there till October 1987. We returned to Nigeria thereafter. We had our second child, a boy, in Griffin Close in December 1986. We enjoyed shopping on Saturdays at the Bull Ring. We particularly liked shopping at the open market in the Bull Ring which very closely resembled Nigerian markets.

My experience at the University of Birmingham had a great impact on my academic career and the selection as the prize winner of the Nigeria Prize for Science of the Nigerian Academy of Science sponsored by the Nigeria LNG Limited. It gave me an I-Can-Do-It spirit. My supervisor used to tell us at our Tuesday research meetings that if you think hard enough and for a long time on a particular problem you will find a solution. This has helped me a great deal in dealing with problems that have confronted me in my academic career. It increased my drive for hard work and excellence. This paid off when in 1988, one of our (Professor Dean and I) research papers won the Edwin Walker Prize for 1988 of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers for its outstanding contribution to manufacturing engineering. As a matter of fact, I won the Nigeria Prize for Science Award 2010 based on the work I started at the University of Birmingham. The work that won the award was titled *Development of a New Method for Precision Die Design*. The work arose from one of the suggestions for further work in my Ph.D thesis where I had suggested that the simple model developed for die expansion should be explored further. Immediately I returned to Nigeria, I began working on that suggestion. I completed the work in 2008 in a book form which was published as *Precision Die Design by the Die Expansion Method* by *Trans Tech Publications Ltd*, Zurich, Switzerland in 2009. Therefore, I owe this award to Professor Trevor Dean who introduced me to precision die design and the University of Birmingham for giving me a solid foundation in engineering research.

My relationship with the University is a continuing one. In 2006, Professor Dean was in Nigeria for almost two weeks, where he was a guest of the University of Benin, Nigeria, as the Guest Speaker at the First International Conference on Engineering Research and Development held in Benin City, Nigeria. In August 2007, my wife and I were in the United Kingdom for two weeks. We stayed in Birmingham for five days where we tried to relive our past experiences in Birmingham. It was quite a great visit! We saw that quite a number of places had changed. Griffin Close that we loved so much didn't seem to be there again. The Bull Ring had changed completely. Trying to find our way in Birmingham became difficult because of the enormous changes. We visited the University, the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering and the Alumni Office. Professor Dean took me round some three laboratories. I never met any of the persons I knew when I was a research student. However for the period I visited many people had gone on summer holiday.

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