

## **ADDRESS PRESENTED BY FISHER EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRUST AT THE 2024 HOMECOMING/AGM OF GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, UMUAHIA.**

Compliments of the season.

I wish to join fellow Old Boys in congratulating the distinguished class of 1974 on their golden jubilee celebrations. We thank God for your lives and for bringing you thus far. May I also congratulate all Umuahians for the successes achieved so far in the restoration journey. It has not been easy but it has been worth every ounce of effort thrown into it.

The Annual Homecoming provides us an opportunity to assess how far the journey has been, re-strategise and recalibrate where necessary. It also affords FEDT the opportunity to brief the house on its activities in the current year. This year is no different as there were more wins on different fronts.

### **THE MISSION OF RESTORATION**

However, it is important that we constantly remind ourselves of the core reason for the restoration project. Our purpose is not to build infrastructure. The purpose is encapsulated in the vision and mission statement of the Fisher Educational Development Trust; to return Government College Umuahia to a place of educational excellence. Possibly, the best school for boys in Africa and beyond.

General principles of our success so far include-

- The evolution of world-class educational programs designed to support students, identify and cultivate their talents across a wide range of fields: the sciences, arts, technical fields, entrepreneurship, Information Technology etc.
- A merit based admission and recruitment policy
- Provision of a Scholarship scheme to ease the financial burden on financially challenged but talented students.

- Striving to go beyond even the threshold of high standards and develop a student pool with both national and global reach.
- Small class size of 20 – 25 students.
- Hiring of world class leadership team and teachers.

This academic year, we shall be taking our first NECO examination, a measure of our educational programs. And by 2027, Government College Umuahia will be graduating the first set of the new generation of GCU alumni. We cannot claim we are there yet but we are certainly on a sure march to meet our mission. The above consciousness is what has informed and inspired all other processes.

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RESTORATION JOURNEY.**

Before I proceed to give the update on FEDT activities within the 2024 business year, permit me to do a little recap on the journey so far. This is particularly necessary for Old Boys that joined the train lately.

The years 2012 to 2014 was a period of robust engagement with the Abia State Government to,

- Allow the management and funding of GCU by Alumni.
- Sign MOU in that regard with Alumni.
- Sign Trust Deed .

The Restoration Committee was successful on all the above quests.

The year 2015 was occupied by the need to set up structures to drive the restoration project.

- Set up a Secretariat (Done).
- Constitute and register the Trust (Done)
- Open Trust accounts (Done)
- Initiate fundraising (Done)

2016 - 2018

- Design a blueprint for the construction phase
- Raise the necessary funds
- Reconstruct decayed infrastructure
- Restore the school
- Re-open it
- Put in place sustainability plans

In the 2019 to 2021 period, actual construction commenced. Many milestones in facility restoration were accomplished. These facilities include:

- The New Gate House
- New Power Yard
- 8nos 2 bedroom flat Teachers' Quarters
- Tarring of 1 kilometer School Main Drive
- Brand new Dining Hall
- School House
- New House
- Classroom Block A
- Classroom Block B
- Classroom Block C
- Expanded ultr modern Library
- New Admin Building
- New ultra modern clinic
- New Principal's House
- Old Principal' House
- Modern Laboratory Building
- New Second Gate
- Landscaping and Horticulture
- New external school fence
- An inner wire mesh fence

- Armed security with 24 hour coverage
- Water reticulation across the campus
- Power reticulation across the campus
- New Transformer
- New Generating sets
- A 50,000 liter Braithwaite overhead tank
- A 15,000 liter Braithwaite overhead tank
- Dormitories furnished with bed and beddings
- Classrooms furnished with student tables and chairs
- Tractor and lawn mowing machines
- Furnishing of Teachers' Quarters
- Furnishing of Dining Hall with required equipment.

For the years 2022 – 2024, the academic segment commenced and the following processes were implemented.

- Marketing admissions for new intakes
- Hiring of Principal and teachers.
- Hiring of non-academic staff
- Provision of modern teaching and electronic aids.
- Putting into place of sustainability policies.
- Establishment of an Endowment Fund.

Having said that, I wish to now bring you up to speed with FEDT's programs and activities for the current year 2024. Despite the severe economic strictures and other challenges, FEDT remained focused on critical GCU developmental goals most importantly, the firming up of Phase 1 and initiation of Phase 2 of the GCU Restoration Project. Several projects were undertaken and successfully completed. These include:

- Installation of CCTV cameras.

- Solar street lights revamping
- Provision of Laboratory furniture and equipment.
- Provision of Interactive Board systems
- White Marker Boards
- New Lockers and shelves
- Window Blinds in Classrooms
- Fans for the Dining Hall
- Mattresses and Pillows
- Double Bunks in the houses
- Washing machines
- 58" Flat screen TV set and DSTV Decoder
- Classroom Tables and Chairs
- Metal Hostel Lockers
- 3-in-1 seats in the Common room
- Initiation of the construction of New Erekosima House.

## **FINANCE**

The financial activities of FEDT is as reflected in its audited accounts covering the years 2015 – 2022.

The 2023 audited accounts will be available on FEDT website by the end of the year.

## **CONCLUSION**

Once more, I appeal to all stakeholders to sustain the efforts. We shall be counting on your support for the endowment fund, adoption of new projects by classes, branches and individual old boys, funding for GCU's short, medium and long term projects.as well as funding for the fencing of the school compound.

I implore everyone to put their hands on the plough to enable us reach greater heights.

May we continue to shine as one.



Up Umuahia.

**Dr. Okwesilieze Nwodo**  
*Chairman*