



Prof. Cyril O. Enwonwu, O.O.N., FAS 2011 Convention And Charles Okoye Memorial Keynote Speaker

Professor Cyril O. Enwonwu, FAS – a 1953 graduate of Christ the King College, Onitsha, was a 2003 recipient of Nigerian National Honors – the Order of the Niger (OON). Prof. Enwonwu was chosen the CKC Onitsha role model for 2005 and in 2008, was among the recipients of the CKC-AAA ESA award and the C.K.C Onitsha 75th Anniversary Meritorious Service Award. He is presently a tenured Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Schools of Dentistry and Medicine, University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD.

After completing two years for the London University External Intermediate B. Sc. Degree at the then University College of Ibadan in 1956, Enwonwu proceeded to Bristol University, England on a scholarship from the Federal Government of Nigeria. He received his Dental Surgery degree from Bristol University with a Distinction in Dental Anatomy and Physiology, the British Dental Association Prize in Dental Anatomy and Physiology, and the Claudius Ash Prize in Oral Surgery, Pathology and Orthodontics.

Intent on a research career rather than clinical practice, he joined the Department of Chemical Pathology, Ibadan in 1963 as a Rockefeller Foundation Research Fellow. He subsequently returned to Bristol University where he completed the requirements for the Master of Dental Surgery (MDS) Degree with emphasis on Epidemiology and Public Health, and the Ph. D Degree in the Medical Sciences. He then enrolled at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA where he received his Doctor of Science degree in Nutritional Biochemistry and Metabolism.

Cyril Enwonwu's research interests over the years have focused primarily on the cellular and sub-cellular effects of malnutrition (nutrient deficiencies as well as excesses) and their interactions with infections, and immunological parameters. He has published extensively in various scientific disciplines. Leading a team of Scientists from the World Health Organization, the University of Maryland, the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, Professor Enwonwu has, for several years conducted research on the pathogenesis of Noma, a dehumanizing oro-facial gangrene affecting deprived children, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. He and his team played a key role in promoting the establishment of a Noma Children's Hospital in Sokoto in 1999, and he served as the first Chairman of the International Management Board of the Hospital for 4 years.

Professor Enwonwu has held various other academic and professional positions, including Research Professor at the University of Washington, Seattle, USA; Professor/Chairman of the Department of Medical Biochemistry as well as Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nigeria (Enugu Campus); Director of the National Institute of Medical Research of Nigeria, Yaba; and Director/Professor of the Nutrition Research Center at Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee, USA. He is in his eighth year as Chairman of the WHO-sponsored Regional Center for Oral Health Research and Training Initiatives, Jos, Nigeria. Professor Enwonwu, a Fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Sciences, is also an elected member of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, American Society for Investigative Pathology, American Society for Nutritional Sciences and the International Association for Dental Research, among others.

He has also served as a member of the prestigious Board of Scientific Counselors of NIDCR/NIH, Bethesda, MD (1988-1993), as well as a member of several WHO Expert Advisory Panels. Although residing in the USA, Professor Enwonwu continues to be actively involved in the health research problems of the developing world, especially sub-Saharan Africa. [TAG]