

# The AOOF Scholarship Program

*by Dr. Opeolu Okunola*

The AOOF offers scholarships to deserving AFIJIO students annually. Application forms are made available in April every year for collection at the AFIJIO Local Government Headquarters at Jobele, Oyo State. Scholarships are awarded in form of books and stationery, payment of SSCE (Senior School Certificate Examination) fees and cash award for various categories of students.

## Eligibility

The screening committee carefully scrutinizes application forms and other attached documents submitted by applicants. For a student to be considered eligible for a scholarship, he/she must have produced evidence/s of excellence in academic achievement and character.

## Activities of AOOF So Far . . .

The AOOF scholarship program was launched in August 2004 with the award of scholarships to twenty-one (21) AFIJIO students. A total of two hundred applications were received and processed. In 2005, the total number of scholarships awarded increased to thirty-two (32). To monitor progress of students, AOOF requests those scholarship recipients send in their results at the end of the year. Four (4) recipients with outstanding performance in 2004 had their scholarships renewed in 2005.

## Conclusion

So far, a total of fifty-three (53) students from Ilora, Awe and Fiditi have benefited from the AOOF scholarship program. In 2006, we hope to reach out to smaller AFIJIO towns like Akinmorin, Imini, etc.

To our supporters . . . .

When we embarked on this journey, we had no idea what it took to execute the affairs of a not-for-profit organization. With little more than passion and some ideas, we formed and committed the AOOF to three fundamental goals: scholarship, healthcare and community development. After an overwhelmingly successful first year, it quickly became evident that this idea was unsustainable without an external support system. We realized that in order to sustain and grow the work of the foundation, we would need the support of our friends and like-minded organizations. Some of you joined us early and some were called upon later for support.

You all have joined the cause and thrown your support behind the work of the foundation and we thank you very much. Even before we showed that we can execute on the vision, you believed in us. Because of you, lives have been saved and the future restored for many people. The success of the last two years would have been impossible without you.

What we've learned over the last two years is that the credibility of a non-profit organization is its most important asset. We will jealously guard this credibility and will never betray your trust in us.

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Fundraising strategy update . . . .

In 2004, the needs of the organization were met mostly by levy and bequest. That was the year to prove to ourselves that we were serious. In 2005, we needed to prove to the AFIJIO community that we were serious and that we had the necessary staying power and commitment. To meet our 2005 financial goals, we looked to some of our key friends and they came through big time. In 2006 and beyond, we are committed to maintaining sustainable growth. In order to do that, we will rely on the goodwill of our current supporters and expand our reach to include more friends as well as corporate sponsors.

Over the past two years, support has come in the form of time and skills commitment, supplies, and financial contributions. These support elements are the lifeblood of AOOF. In 2005, AOOF submitted its application for the stringent U.S. IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt designation. We are hopeful of a favorable consideration. This designation would not only signal to anyone interested in supporting the organization that there is governmental oversight on the activities of AOOF, it would also open new doors for our fundraising efforts.

In order to meet our 2006 goals, the foundation must raise about \$12,000. We need your help. I know you believe in what the foundation is doing. For those who were in a position to assist us in any of the previous years, we hope we can continue to count on your generosity. The success of the foundation depends on your support. For our new friends, we welcome you and hope for your support.

Finally, we want to hear from you, we want to learn from you, and we want to leverage your experience and expertise in expanding this outreach effort into many more communities around Nigeria.



## **AOOF HEALTH OUTREACH IN NIGERIA**

*by Dr. Titi Akinremi, Medical Director AOOF*

Our outreach has seen a doubling in attendance in one year because the people are more informed about their health.

Chronic non-communicable diseases in Nigeria include hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, cataracts, glaucoma, and cancer. In children, sickle cell anemia is still a major killer and worm infestation is a communicable disease with far reaching results, especially anemia with poor mental performance and growth. Most chronic diseases are usually diagnosed late, sometimes when treatment will be worthless as in metastatic cancer, or when complications have set in as in stroke from hypertension.

That's why AOOF is committed to early diagnosis and preventive intervention through

annual education and health screenings of the target population. The laboratory tests we conduct include:

- Baseline hematology blood work up with genotype and blood group
- Urinalysis
- Blood cholesterol
- Blood glucose

We also conduct the following clinical examination:

- Blood pressure measurement
- Eye tests
- Cancer screening (PSA for men's prostate, Pap Smear and breast examination in women).

After a screening exercise, positive cases are referred to generalists or specialists as needed for definitive treatment and follow up. Usually the greatest efforts in terms of commitment and finance are drawn at this stage.

## **DONOR UPDATE**

*By Melanie E. Odeleye, Health Fair Volunteer*

The efforts of AOOF would not be possible without the generosity of the many families and individuals who support our cause. We greatly appreciate all the support that we have received, from financial means to time and energy to supplies provided to AOOF. This month, we interviewed several of our top financial sponsors, in order to ascertain why they believe in our cause, even when it was simply a vision, and determine why these sponsors give so generously.

Three of our top sponsors, Mr. Johnson Akinwusi, Mr. Yomi Famurewa and Mr. Leke Thomas, were interviewed to answer the questions previously listed and several more. While they were all born in Nigeria, identifying with villages such as Ilesha, Modakeke and Agbowa-Ikosi, each of these sponsors calls "home" the place where they have established their own families, which all happen to be in the U.S. Mr. Thomas articulated his sentiments with "Whenever I'm in Lagos, I get the feeling that I'm on vacation and can't wait to get home – N.Y."

These gentlemen expect for the foundation to follow through with the stated goals of providing health care and educational scholarships for youth in the Ilora area, with the intent to expand efforts throughout Nigeria. When asked why they give so generously, our sponsors were very modest, but owed their support in AOOF to the fact that they understand the issues facing the people in Ilora, and places like it. "I know the importance of the project, I can understand the cause. I believe in it because I know the area and the problems," said Mr. Akinwusi regarding his generosity. When asked about plans to participate in some of the activities hosted by AOOF, our sponsors agreed that without constraint on time, they would definitely participate, and would "like to bring

friends who are able – I already have three or four people in mind,” as quoted by Mr. Famurewa.

Again, AOOF would like to graciously thank all of our supporters. The vision proposed by late Chief Odeleye could not be realized in full without you. Special thanks to our featured sponsors for taking the time to be recognized and interviewed.

## **CURSORY APPRAISAL OF AOOF - 2003 TO-DATE**

*by Jonathan Olatunde Ajayi, December 2005*

The idea of the Abel Ogundokun Odeleye Foundation is a novelty of a kind. In order to understand and accept the reality of the impact the foundation has made in the past two years, there is a need for me to draw attention to the scenario before its inauguration. In line with traditional Yoruba custom and practice, following the demise of the late sage, politician, scholar, writer and community leader, Chief Dr A.O. Odeleye, a sumptuous party was held in honor of the old man. The whole town was agog for the late community leader.

Barely a year after, people expected that similar party would be thrown to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of the High Chief, an entirely new event unfolded- instead of the gathering on a large school field for wining and dining, there was a gathering of a select few in a hotel hall; instead of slaughtering of cows and rams for consumption, there was the sharing of the vision of an Abel Ogundokun Odeleye Foundation, intensely geared toward building a future for otherwise futureless children. There and then the foundation of the Foundation was laid. That same day and moment, names of pupils who had earlier gone through some tests and were successful were called out and given scholarship awards. So it is real! So it could be this easy I sure I the owner of this check, this money? So, Ill is able to buy those books Ill is unable to buy. So Ill be able to eat well and concentrate better in class. So Ill be able to change my notoriously torn school uniform. So Ill be able to change my school canvas. These are some of the many statements some of AOOF scholars were making. Their happy parents who were also present at the occasion had more awesome expressions. But given to their maturity, they struggled endlessly with overwhelming emotion of joy- that those resources could have gone into fatty meat and mouth-watering drinks at the remembrance of Baba Odeleye had been converted into cash flow that would free them from burden and better the future of their children.

Prior to the inauguration of foundation, for about three days the people of Ilora community had enjoyed free medical services. There was the general check-up, blood pressure check and blood sugar test resulting in the discovery diabetic cases that had to be referred to the general hospital for comprehensive treatment. These innocent diabetic patients had been saved from sudden death. When the exercise first started, people never believed it was real, but soon the news gained currency and more and more people

trooped into the church auditorium where the event was holding and everyone got different drugs for their ailments- without paying for it. That was the first year of the anniversary of the death of the old man.

The second year anniversary was in August 2004. This time, the number of awardees increased and surprisingly, the monetary equivalent of the award also increased. Thus, the AOOF scholars increased in number and their pockets became fatter and their future brighter. Both students and parents were full of thanksgiving and testimonies. As usual, free medical services were also tendered to the people. Those who ordinarily could not afford the drugs went home smiling.

The high point of this year remembrance anniversary was the donation of a mortuary building to the Oyo State Government. The AOOF officially handed over the mortuary building to the government at the General Hospital, Ilora. It was the first of its kind. The AOOF has indeed made a great mark within the last two years. There is no doubt that AOOF scholars and would-be scholars are looking forward to AOOFs big event come 2006.

### **IMPACT OF AOOF ON THE COMMUNITY**

*by Dr. Bidemi Odeleye, PhD Secretary AOOF*

That many leaders in and around the AFIJIO communities as God-sent consider the Abel Ogundokun Odeleye Foundation (AOOF) is definitely not out of place. However, it must be restated here that it is only a consolidation of the embodiment of the man, Abel Ogundokun Jewoola Odeleye, PhD (AD 1923-2003). Chief Odeleye was a welfarist per excellence, a man doggedly committed to the overall emancipation of people, even beyond the frontiers of his native AFIJIO, in the southwestern region of Nigeria. In his lifetime, his doors were always open to all. While in the public service, he did all he could to help his people, spending and being spent for the community.

It is on record that of all community development projects in the AFIJIO area from 1957 till he died in 2003, he was either the initiator or co-facilitator. He was so consumed with passion for community that almost nothing was done without him. Here was a man who mortgaged all he had, even his marriage for his community. On retirement in 1978, contrary to all expectations, he decided to settle amongst his people, most of who were peasantry. His commitment to them did not waver till he breathed his last on August 24, 2003. Since his translation, testimonies keep pouring in, several individuals and families attesting to his large heart. Indeed, he gave his all so that others could have a chance. Also, his last will was unequivocal: The AOOF should ensure that all my assets are to be spent for community development and give scholarships to deserving indigent students.

Hence our mandate at AOOF is borne out of the heart of this great man. And since the inauguration of the foundation in 2003, we have been running with this vision of reaching out to the community. It has been tremendous joy to all of us in the AOOF seeing lives

changed, families impacted and joys of several hundreds of people each time we have outreach. A story was told of a man who was going to withdraw his daughter from school because he was not able to pay for the Senior School Certificate examination. The scholarship granted by the AOOF was the entire lifeline that family needed. We had several cases of hyper hypertension, which were discovered and controlled by our medical team. What would we say about the cervical and prostate cancer screening outcomes?

Here are some samples of scores of responses (unedited) we have been receiving at the AOOF:

*This is to express my gratitude to the entire family of late Abel Ogundokun Odeleye for the substantial award, which was presented to me on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2004. I am therefore using this medium to say thank you. Good measure, shaken together, pressed down in your endeavor in Jesus name. Yours faithfully, Ojo Omotola C.*

*We wish to register our appreciation to the Abel Ogundokun Odeleye Foundation Award Committee, Ilora for selecting our son Akintujoye Eniayo of Fiditi Grammar School as one of the recipients of the scholarship award. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless and uphold all the members of the Odeleye Family. Mrs. R.T.Akintujoye nee Ojelabi*

*This is to express our profound gratitude for the scholarship award of 2004 ABEL OGUNDOKUN ODELEYE FOUNDATION of N10, 000.00 each granted to our children, Messrs Adeleke Muyiwa and Adeleke Oluseye. It was glorious joy of praise that shall ever remain green in our memory. Really we cannot repay you, but we pray that God in His infinite mercy shall repay you and bless ABEL OGUNDOKUN ODELEYE FOUNDATION and the entire family of Odeleye both at home and abroad in Jesus name. You shall continue to grow and shine for the glory of God. Your moon and star shall never wither in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Amen). Olorun Olodumare yio je ki awon omo tiyin naa sori re o. Iwaju le o ma a lo, eko ni rehin o. Amin. E se pupo, a dupe a tun ope da.  
Â Yours in Christ, S. Adeleke, for the entire family of ADELEKES.*

All the traditional rulers in the AFIJIO Local Government and the Chairman of AFIJIO Local Government applaud the incoming of the AOOF. They all are full of prayers for the foundation. The Akibio of Ilora, Oba Olayiwola Olawoore, also a beneficiary of our medical outreach, remarked that the AOOF is “a dream come true” and that the “heavens have come visiting my people”!

Apart from the scholarship awards that have almost doubled, the foundation has extended its outreach to Awe and it is expected that more towns will be reached in 2006.

The Mortuary Unit/Building built by the foundation at Ilora General Hospital is being put to full use by the hospital authorities. Bodies need not be carried to Ibadan (almost 1 hour journey) again and everyone is really grateful to the AOOF!

Our projection to sink at least a borehole every year is still on course. It is hoped that by the time the boreholes are in place, the problem of water borne diseases that is usually a nightmare for the people in the dry season, will be greatly abated if not completely eliminated.

## **2005 HEALTH FAIR STATS**

*by Mrs. Yemi Omole*

A total of 114 children between the ages of 1-14 were administered de-worming medications and multivitamins were also given to them.

Registered adults - 421 female 291, male 131. There are about 100 other adults but whose sexes were not well defined. In all we had close to 600 people, but we couldn't get the necessary facts about them. This shows our recording was faulty somehow.

7-tested positive to glucose  
4 had traces of protein.

Blood pressure;

16 adults- [60/50---100/90]

238 adults- [100/90---150/110]

127 adults-- [150/110 and above]

(Am sure sis has the information on the pap-smears screening done.)

We ran out of stock and people still keep on coming. You can be sure of people coming everyday even if the program runs for a whole year.

9 men had the prostate cancer test.