

## WHAT SOME COLLEAGUES SAY OF AYENI

We begin this article, which deals largely with what R. O. Ayeni's colleagues have to say about his significant impact on Mathematics and influence upon lives, with the statement "NO PROBLEM" credited to him and attested to by those that worked with him. Some comments from his colleagues are as presented below:

### NATIONAL PRESIDENT (Prof. M. O. Osilike)<sup>1</sup>

#### AYENI: A GOOD LISTENER AND EASILY APPROACHABLE

The President, Council and members of the Nigerian Mathematical Society (NMS) join the family and the LAUTECH community to mourn the sudden demise of our dearly beloved colleague, father and mentor PROFESSOR REUBEN OLAFENWA AYENI. Professor Ayeni, like a candle in the wind, traversed mother earth with indelible footprints until he was snatched away by the cold hands of death. Your brief but eventful life was positively infectious and we attest to the fact that you were a blessing to many who came your way from diverse walks of life and most especially in your chosen field of endeavour which included Teaching and Research in Pure and Applied Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences.

Professor Ayeni played significant role in the re-invigoration of the NMS. During his tenure for five years from 2006 to 2011 as President, the Society was up and doing in all her statutory duties and responsibilities nationally and internationally. The annual conferences were held at Federal University of Technology, Akure in 2007, University of Port-Harcourt in 2008, University of Ilorin in 2009, Lagos State University in 2010 and Federal University of Technology, Minna in 2011 where he handed over the mantle of leadership to the present Council.

Professor Ayeni was a good listener, easily approachable, amiable and a veritable tool of solution to diverse inter personal problems. He was external examiner for undergraduate and postgraduate examinations in several universities in the country and abroad. His exit at this time is indeed a great loss to the world of Mathematic al Sciences. We of the NMS mourn his demise and wish the family and

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the LAUTECH community the fortitude to bear the irreplaceable loss.

May his gentle amiable soul rest in peace. Adieu

### **THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR (Prof. A. S. Gbade- gesin)<sup>2</sup>**

#### **A SUSTAINING PILLAR HAS GONE**

It was a great shock to hear the news of the demise of an erudite professor, the pioneer staff, the foundation Head of Department of Pure and Applied Mathematics and the foundation Dean of Students' Affairs of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni on Sunday 30th September, 2012. Professor R. O. Ayeni was a committed researcher and an invaluable gift to the academic community. He was the Head of Department of Pure and Applied Mathematics for ten years, during which he nurtured the department from infancy to full maturity. He served as an encourager to every staff of the department, especially the academic staff by encouraging them to develop themselves. As the Dean of Students' Affairs, his love and concern for students' welfare were characterized with giving, deep commitment and dedication. Thus, he was given a title "Baba Ewe" (Father of the students of LAUTECH).

He was one of the sustaining pillars of the university during any stormy period. He was a man with seven hearts; a man who found it extremely difficult to rest or stand idle. His selfless service has always been noted. Even when on his sick bed, he was still thinking of how to mobilize people to attend the 2012 NMS conference in Zaria, but death did not allow the dream to come pass.

In his quest to influence lives, provide leadership role and create leadership ability in the younger ones, he started his academic career as a lecturer at the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria in 1978. In 1979, he moved to Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria to contribute his own quota in realizing the vision and mission of his alma-mater. This he did from 1979-1990. Professor Ayeni would have continued his academic career (lecturing/research) at OAU till death, but in 1990, there was a clarion

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call for him to come to use his wealth of experience, academic expertise and excellence to join the team that would start the Oyo State University of Technology, (OSUTECH) Ogbomosho in then old Oyo State. This university is the present Ladoke Akintola.

It is worth pointing out that Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni was the first person in the history of Universities in Nigeria to be the president of three professional bodies almost at the same time. President, Mathematical Association of Nigeria, 2002 - 2004; President, Nigerian Mathematical Society, 2006 - 2012; President, Nigerian Association of Mathematical Physics between 2006 - 2010. Professor Ayeni during his life time was Fellow of Academy Controls (FAC) since 2000 and Fellow of Mathematical Association of Nigeria(FMAN) since 2005.

Another amazing thing is that he did not only bury himself in the academic world, but was a family man and equally sociable. He was married with children and was given a chieftaincy title in 1984 as "Odofofin of Ketuland" by all the Yoruba Obas. It is difficult to fathom how he was able to cope with all these activities, given the fact that he had only 24 hours a day like any other normal human being. Though a man of many parts, he was a man who knew what he wanted, what he needed to achieve and he was always ready to pay the price to achieve all these. He would not do anything for financial gain of selfish interest. To prof. R. O. Ayeni, nothing is impossible.

Where can we get just a man who will perfectly fill the vacuum left behind? His prints are everywhere: academic, social, community and spiritual services. He, for example, served as Auditor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Ile-Ife.

What manner of man is Professor Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni? Give him any assignment that you think will be too difficult to find a solution; Prof. Ayeni would provide you with solution as soon as possible. He held several positions because he knew how to get things done with ease and with available limited resources. Olafenwa, what else can I say about you? The whole world seated here is celebrating you for a life successfully spent. Unfortunately, you did not tarry long enough with us to enjoy the fruits of your labor, to see the children of your biological children, even though you have seen few of those of your academic children, but you shall always be remembered by us, how true is the Yoruba saying "Igi to ba to kii pe nigbo" (A good and useful tree does not last in the forest). Even if we try to forget you, situations, challenges and circumstances will

always bring your memory back to us because of your style of approaches to issues and life. Your boldness and wisdom shall never allow us to forget you.

ADIEU, PROFESSOR REUBEN OLAFENWA AYENI

**NATIONAL PRESIDENT (Prof. (Lady) Uche Agwagah, FMAN, JP)<sup>3</sup>**

#### AYENI: A FRIEND TO EVERY ONE

It is with a deep sense of sorrow that we, the members of the Mathematical Association of Nigeria (M.A.N) write to commiserate with you, the entire family of the late Prof. R. O. Ayeni, on the sudden demise of your dear father, husband and uncle. This is one of those times that the English dictionary fails us because we cannot find words that can adequately describe the dynamics that represented Prof. R. O. Ayeni. He was a rare gem, a distinguished scholar, a mathematics guru, a great achiever, a man of superlative high standard, complete integrity and boundless enthusiasm for whatever task he laid his hand upon. The courage of his faith and the warm and glowing brightness of his friendship cannot be forgotten.

Prof. Ayeni was always there for his family, friends and the Mathematical Association of Nigeria through thick and thin, not minding any consequences. In fact, he was a friend everyone wishes to have because he never dodged a responsibility, and never refused to take on difficult task. He practiced what he preached, what he believed he pursued with all his heart and soul. Prof. Ayeni lifted M.A.N. to its enviable height, serving the association as National President in the year 2002-2004, and was awarded fellow of M.A.N. (FMAN) in 2005. Our national Secretariat is situated on the land the departed Prof. Ayeni bought for the association during his tenure as President.

We join in extending to the members of the family our heartfelt sympathy. Our prayer is that the Almighty God in His infinite mercies shall console and grant your family the grace and fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

Adieu, a great colleague and friend! May your gentle soul rest in the bosom of our Lord.

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**THE DEAN (Prof. A. A. Arigbabu)<sup>4</sup>****WHAT A LOSS!**

What a loss! A great man of numbers is gone. A mathematician par excellence and a great mentor to quite a number of up coming mathematicians. He touched so many lives in more ways than one. Just less than two weeks ago he announced his exist to the whole world, nobody paid attention. The inaugural was actually an "exaugural" or indeed a valedictory lecture.

Rest in peace our great mathematician and mathematics educator.

**Samson OLANIYI<sup>5</sup>****SYNOPSIS OF MY MOMENTS WITH PROF. R. O. AYENI**

I was privileged to meet Professor R.O. Ayeni at my undergraduate level in LAUTECH where he taught me MTH405 An Introduction to Mathematical Modelling. For the very first time, I saw Mathematics being applied to solve physical problems in other fields of human endeavours.

One occasion that lingers on in my memory was when I came back to LAUTECH for convocation during my NYSC period at FUTMinna, Niger State. My intention was just to take some photographs but on getting to the Department of Mathematics, LAUTECH, people started demanding for refreshment which I never prepared for. I remember Prof. Ayeni said Ah! K'o le work ba ye. n, ti o ba fun wo. n ni nkan, wa ni problem Translated: It cant work that way, if you dont give them refreshment, you will have problem. Behold, Prof. Ayeni covered my shame by giving me money to prepare refreshment for the people. What a generous man he was!

Ultimately, my relationship with Prof. Ayeni became more intimate when I was assigned to understudy him in teaching MTH405 and MTH503. Despite the fact that I was not his postgraduate student, yet, he adopted me as one of his research collaborators (LAUTECHs 9th Inaugural Lecture series refers). Within 7 months in 2012, we published 3 journal articles in Biomathematics and Fluid Dynamics.

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It is no gainsaying to remark that Prof. Ayeni was a great father, researcher per excellence, an encourager, an epitome of magnanimity and a very hardworking scholar. Unfortunately, 10 days after his Inaugural Lecture, he breathed his last.

Adieu Prof!

## **Olukayode ADEBIMPE<sup>6</sup>**

### EXIT OF AN ACADEMIC GIANT

On the 30th September, 2012, exactly ten (10) days after the inaugural lecture he delivered at Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomosho titled 'The Quest For Development: Why Mathematics Matters', Professor Reuben Olafenwa at 64 bid the entire mathematics world farewell.

My first contact with this great and doyen of mathematics was in 1998 when he was still the Head of Department, Pure and Applied Mathematics, LAUTECH. I had a personal discussion with him of what the future holds for me as a mathematics student, he advised and encouraged me that through hardwork that I have a good future in mathematics. He went ahead to supervise my B.Tech, M.Tech and PhD theses.

Professor Ayeni was a philanthropist per excellence and a lover of peace. He lived his life for the people. He was an inspiration to all of us fortunate to pass through him. He was indeed a giant in the field of mathematics admired across the black race. All those who knew Ayeni especially his many students and collaborators know that nothing can replace his insight and personality. His passion for research is second to none. He would long be remembered for the deep sense of integrity, passion and patriotism that was infused in everything he ever undertook. He was indeed a model. When others are busy amassing wealth to themselves, Ayeni was building academic empire around himself. He was indeed a great man.

His passion for research is second to none and incomparable. I see his type only among the whites. Ayeni has written many textbooks for primary, secondary and tertiary students. He has over hundred and fifty publications in reputable journals both in Nigeria and abroad.

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Ayeni, Fellow of Mathematical Association of Nigeria (FMAN) before his death was a member, African Mathematical Union (AMU) and member, American Mathematical Society (AMS).

I will forever be grateful and humbled to have had the opportunity to learn from this great mathematician. I am saddened by your sudden exit. I extend my deepest condolences to his immediate and extended families, his academic colleagues and children and mathematical societies he belonged to while on earth. May the Almighty God give us the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

Adieu, a great mathematician and a seasoned researcher of repute. Sleep well until we meet to part no more.

**Samuel O. ADESANYA<sup>7</sup>**

### BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES

Professor R. O. Ayeni was a wonderful father, mentor and friend. He loved spending time with his students in general, and especially post graduate students. He lived his life as a core researcher. He had no tolerance for lazy minds. He had a contagious disposition wrapped in an innocent smile. He always had a kind word of encouragement to say to those around him.

I remember all the wonderful places we went together for conferences and meetings of the mathematical society. When I was his postgraduate student, Prof. would always pay for my travelling expenses and conference registration fees, including journal publications. He was always there for me in particular and for all of us in general. All through my stay in LAUTECH, I never had to buy food nor pay for accommodation because he designated a postgraduate room in his house where anyone was free to log regardless of his age or religious inclination.

Though beautiful memories like these may fade with time, his ideals would, however, live on in me till my dying days. For example, how can I forget how many times he had to pay the school fees of some of his students and did so with ease and joy, or how he gave the less privileged and the aged a reason to live. With Professor Ayeni, friendship is a life-long journey. For instance, he supervised my B.Sc project, M.Sc. and PhD theses during a period spanning about fifteen years. This friendship continued till his last days when

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on his sick bed he still gave me a clue to solving a mathematical problem. Little did I know that he was giving me his last legacy. He would be greatly missed by me and many others in mathematics community.

Adieu Prof.

### THE ACTING HEAD OF DEPT. ('Femi FATADE)<sup>8</sup>

AYENI WAS SPECTACULAR, UNIQUE AND OUTSTANDING

Prof., you were a father and mentor that lived and worked for others to progress. Spectacular, unique and outstanding among colleagues, you have lived a purposeful, fruitful and fulfilled life. You have reproduced yourself apart from your biological children in the minds and heart of all students that passed through you.

Adieu R. O. Ayeni

### THE HEAD OF DEPT. (Amos Oladele POPOOLA)<sup>9</sup>

GLORIOUS EXIT: THE IMPACT AND CONSOLATION

At this time, it is a sacrilege for me not to acknowledge the earthly presence of an irreplaceable icon, my Academic Father, Teacher, Supervisor, Mentor, and a well wisher, late **Professor Dr. Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni (FMAN, FAC)** who was on earth between Wednesday 9th June, 1948 and Sunday 30th September, 2012. His existence was remarkable because he lived his life for the people.

**1.0 Introduction:** According to [3], "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven..."

**2.0 Impact:** The sudden departure of Professor Reuben Ayeni from this problematic world has really wounded many hearts. Initially, I thought it was a dream but later I realized it wasn't. As a University teacher, anytime I find myself in stark reality of life I would immediately be reminded of his fatherly roles, human and academic contributions. He was a propeller and mentor for many that believe in standing on the shoulder of giant. Just like other Scientist

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in the Western world, he was just too busy building empire of mathematicians (young Academics, highly competitive researchers and problem solvers) [2]. In Osun State University, we believe we lost the Doyen of Mathematics in Nigeria.

**3.0 Consolation:** Professor Reuben Ayeni succeeded in building up many lives before he departed gloriously ten days after telling the world "Why mathematics matters: the quest for development"[1] I cannot pretend that I've not lost a valuable and resourceful erudite scholar and mentor who did not only believe in solving peoples problem but also advocated the principles of Hard work with Integrity and Excellence without any sense of mediocrity. Professor Ayeni's life style was worthy of emulation. He trained the trainers (Ayenites) to be honest and criticize constructively because mathematically,  $1+1$  cannot take any other value in base ten apart from 2. That was why no research student could go to him and succeed in defending a wrong solution. He was so kind, considerate and generous to everyone including people outside the academic community.

**4.0 Conclusion:** Although with heavy heart I agree that my Professor has gone to the great beyond but I still believe that his indelible contributions, legacies and his empire of mathematicians live after him. Adieu Prof and sleep on.

### 5.0 References

1. Ayeni R. O. (2012): Why Mathematics matters: the quest for development", 9th LAUTECH Inaugural Lecture Series 1-
2. Ayeni R. O. (2005): Science is a Common Heritage of Mankind, 3rd Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences Lecture Series page 9
3. Holy Bible (KJV): The Book of Ecclesiastes Chapter 3: 1 - 2.

**Dr. AMUMEJI, Olaseni Taiwo (former Dr. LAMIDI)<sup>10</sup>**

### REMEMBERING A SPECIAL BREED

With a heavy heart full of sorrow, I write this tribute to eulogies Prof. Rueuben Olafenwa Ayeni, one of the African best Mathematical icons and a greatest man I have ever met. Prof. and I had

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just talked on phone on 29th Sept. 2012, exactly 24hrs before his demise, regarding a paper we co-authored. He told me that he had gotten the paper and been working on it for correction and that He would soon get back to me (not knowing He was on a sick bed) but Alas, the news of his death got to me as a surprise. R.O., as He was fondly called by his academic children, was everything to me - my father, mentor and inspiration. He nurtured me and brought out the real man in me. He was a special breed fashioned by God for a special purpose. He was a quintessence of noble virtues, a rare gem and a symbol of success. He was an epitome of love, a role model of care and a parameter of a doting father and affectionate guardian. I am very proud to have been mentored by him and belonged to his academic lineage because through his "Mathematical torch" He integrated us into the society, differentiated us from our equals and heralded numerous bundles of Mathematical giants into the world. He was our spring of happiness, progress and prosperity. I am very glad to have known him as a great mind and personality on a rendezvous with destiny. Truly, I will always mourn him because He was the only person who could write a confidential report on me. Daddy as you continue to blossom in the joy of our lord Jesus Christ, we will not only mourn you but celebrate the achievement you left behind. Good night and sleep well Dad.

**Alfred Olufemi BOSEDE, Ph.D.**<sup>11</sup>

Prof. R. O. AYENI AND HIS "EQUATION OF CONTINUITY"

The reality of the sudden death of our erudite scholar and Professor of Mathematics, Reuben O. Ayeni is yet to be comprehended and cannot just be swallowed like that. However, it is noteworthy to remark that Professor R. O. Ayeni left a very good legacy of academic achievements through his good ability to mentor many students and his good leadership style.

On record, Professor Ayeni produced many Ph. D. students and several Masters' degree holders in the field of Applied Mathematics. Professor Ayeni was a very good teacher, mentor and a seasoned academic per excellence. Above all, he was a very humble Mathematician to the core. No wonder his "Equation of Continuity" was highly emphasised during our undergraduate days. Today, his

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"Equation of Continuity" has been demonstrated by the good number of students he supervised and taught at the Undergraduate and Graduate levels.

More precisely, on the 6th of May, 1982 in the Department of Mathematics at the then University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Ile-Ife, Professor Ayeni introduced "Equation of Continuity" to the 300 level students of Mathematics programme at Ife. I was lucky to be part of this arrangement. Professor S. S. Okoya and some other colleagues were also part of this exercise.

Reproduced below is the "Equation of Continuity" due to Professor Ayeni as presented by him on the 6th of May, 1982: The Equation of Continuity is

$$\partial\rho/\partial t + \text{div}(\rho\mathbf{v}) = 0, \quad (1)$$

where  $\rho$  = the density of the fluid and  $\mathbf{v}$  = the velocity of the fluid at time  $t$ .

Two cases were considered:

Case 1: Steady Flow.

For Steady flow,  $\partial\rho/\partial t = 0$ . Hence, the equation of continuity (1) reduces to  $\text{div}(\rho\mathbf{v}) = 0$ , that is,

$$\nabla\rho.\mathbf{v} + \rho \text{ div } \mathbf{v} = 0. \quad (2)$$

Case 2: Incompressible Flows.

Incompressible flows are defined as those in which the density of each fluid particle is a constant of its motion. That is,  $D\rho/Dt = 0$ . Therefore, the equation of continuity becomes

$$\nabla.\mathbf{v} = 0, \quad (3)$$

since  $\rho = \text{constant}$ .

With this humble background and research exposition by Professor Ayeni, many authors and researchers had contributed immensely to the theory of "Equation of Continuity" in the field of Fluid Mechanics. Several research works on Fluid Mechanics using the approach of "Equation of Continuity" by Professor Ayeni remain very relevant and constant till date.

May his gentle soul rest in perfect peace (Amen).

### **Acknowledgement**

The author thanks the Department of Mathematics, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria for hospitality as a Visiting Scientist during his sabbatical leave in the Department.

**Adesanmi Alao MOGBADEMU<sup>12</sup>**

### AYENI IS QUIET AND PERSUASIVE

Professor Reuben O. Ayeni, who received his N.C.E in Mathematics and Physics with distinction in Mathematics in 1970, B.sc in Mathematics in 1973 and PhD in applied Mathematics from Cornell University in 1978 and died in September 30, 2012 after a brief illness. He was born at Owode-Ketu, Yewa North Local Government Ogun State, Nigeria to an agrarian family of the late William Ogunola and Eunice Omoboni Ayeni on June 19, 1948. His first appointment after the completion of his PhD was at the University of Calabar in the Department of Mathematics in 1978. In 1979, Prof. Reuben O. Ayeni started his lectureship fully with an appointment as lecturer II at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), after about eleven years in the University of Ife, department of Mathematics. He joined the faculty of Science Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, as a full professor and one of the pioneer staff in 1990.

Although he had a very distinguished academic career, he was fond of telling his students that he started his teaching career on part-time basis in 1966 as a French language teacher and thereafter proceeded to University of Lagos for undergraduate studies. Prof Reuben O. Ayeni never forgot his Cornell University exposures and always spoke appreciatively and highly of the education he received there. ROA as he preferred to be called was a recognized National and International specialist in applied mathematics, especially in fluid mechanics. He authored or co-authored nearly two hundred articles. He held academic positions for extended period of time at the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho and Tai-Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. He was the major Professor for over twenty five PhD students, some of whom are top ranked academicians in Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa.

He was primarily responsible for building the applied mathematics program within the LAUTECH Pure and applied Department and for the management of all Mathematics groups in Nigeria. His quiet, persuasive manner enabled him to succeed where individuals with more dynamic but less political personalities had failed. These groups are considered as some of the best in the country. Among his awards was the prestigious Fellow of Academy of Control. This

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was given for his contribution that had made a significant and lasting impact in his field of research. In 1984, he earned a Chieftaincy title of Odofin of Ketuland. In 2005, he received an award as fellow of Mathematical Association of Nigeria.

In addition to his numerous scientific achievements, his colleagues all over the world held him in the highest esteem as a friend, advisor, mentor and father. Prof S.S Okoya, Prof Ayeni's first PhD student remarked " I have learnt so much from him, particularly in terms of his reply to all challenges experienced by all who are related with him is NO PROBLEM" He gave selflessly of his time and energy and was one of the kindest and most patient scholar I ever met. These are, without a doubt, sentiments with which all of us who knew him will agree. He will be sadly missed by many people that he touched.

**Samuel Segun OKOYA<sup>13</sup>**

#### HIS INFLUENCE UPON MY LIFE

I count myself very opportune to have been a student of Late Prof. R. O. Ayeni, first in a semester course in Mechanics at the undergraduate and viscous flow theory at the postgraduate levels and subsequently as his first doctoral student.

My postgraduate study appetite was wetted when Late Prof. Ayeni engineered my redeployment from Sokoto state in 1983 to the then Oyo state to complete my mandatory one year national youth service at Obafemi Awolowo University. I was then very influenced by the then relatively new study on combustion which was Late Ayeni's area of expertise.

While I studied with him for my doctorate, Late Prof. Ayeni was always very helpful, always ready with suggestions about some points under consideration and more importantly always very encouraging, which is very essential for a beginning student. He was very generous and hospitable to both the undergraduate and postgraduate students and to his former students. He gradually taught us how to write articles for publication by making us to contribute to joint publications at the training level. What a pleasure it has been to enjoy his friendship over the last thirty years.

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**THE ACTING HEAD OF DEPT. (A. W. OGUNSOLA)<sup>14</sup>****LATE PROF. R. O. AYENI: THE COMMITTED RESEARCHER**

It was a great shock to hear the news of the demise of an erudite Professor, the pioneer staff, the foundation Head of Department of Pure and Applied Mathematics and the foundation Dean of Student Affairs of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho. Professor Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni on Sunday 30th September, 2012.

Professor R. O. Ayeni was a committed researcher and an invaluable gift to the Scientific community. He was the Head of Department of Pure and Applied Mathematics for ten years, during which he nurtured the department from infancy to full maturity. He served as an encourager to every staff of the department especially the academic staff through self development. As the Dean of Students Affairs his love and concern for students welfare were characterized with giving, deep commitment and dedication. Thus, he was given a title "Father of the students of LAUTECH".

Academically, this scholar of repute was a mentor per excellence. Professor Ayeni you passed away when your expertise is mostly needed. You served as anchor during mock accreditation guiding every member of the accreditation team. You were always one of the sustaining pillars in the University during any stormy period and to ensure calmness. You were a man with seven heart, a man that found rest extremely difficult. Your selfless service was noted, even while on the sick bed you were still thinking on how to mobilize people to attend the 2012 NMS Conference in Zaria, but death did not allow the dream to come to pass. In quest for influencing lives, providing leadership role, and creating leadership ability in the younger ones, he started his academic career as a lecturer at the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria in 1978. In 1979, he moved to Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, to contribute his own quota in realizing the vision and the mission of his Admamat. This he did from 1979-1990. Olafenwa would have continued his academic career (Lecturing/Researching) at O.A.U till death, but in 1990 there was a clarion call for him to come to use his experience, academic expertise and excellence to join the team that would start the Oyo State University, (OSUTECH) Ogbomosho in the then

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old Oyo State. This University is the present Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, where Reuben Olafenwa became the pioneer Head of Department of Pure and Applied Mathematics and also pioneer Dean of Students Affairs at the University. Arising from his services in those two offices; he was nicknamed Olu-Igbo and Baba Ewe respectively.

Today, that small department of Pure and Applied Mathematics with 13 pioneer students has grown to a very large and strong department where many excellent and marketable graduates have emerged under the leadership of Professor Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni. Apart from making better the lives of students in his teaching and Research career, he personally picked up some people and trained them to replicate himself. Such people are Prof. S. S. Okoya of Obafemi Awolowo Ile-Ife Department of Mathematics, a reknown Professor who has won many international awards, Prof. Koriko of Federal University of Technology, Akure, Dr. Adebile an /associate Professor, just to mention but a few. In all he supervised 29 Ph.D Thesis and 79 Master Degree dissertations. He had over one hundred and thirty-five peer reviewed publication in local and international journals. It is amazing, to say that Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni was the first person in the history of Universities in Nigeria to be the President of three professional bodies almost at the same time. President, Mathematical Association of Nigeria 2002 - 2004, President, Nigerian Mathematical Society 2006 - 2012 President, Nigerian Association of Mathematical Physics between 2006 - 2014. Reuben during his life time was fellow of Academy of controls (FAC) since 2000 and fellow of Mathematical Association of Nigeria (FMAN) since 2005. Another amazing thing is that he did not only bury himself into the academic world but he was equally sociable. He was married with children and was given a chieftaincy title in 1984 as "Odofo of Ketuland" by all the Yoruba Obas. It is pertinent to consider how he coped with all this within 24 hours per day. Certainly, he was a man who knew what he wanted, what he needed to achieve, and he was always ready to pay stainless price to achieve all these. He would not do anything for financial gain or selfish interest. To Prof. R. O. Ayeni, nothing is impossible.

Where can we get just a man who will perfectly fill and fit the vacuum he left behind. His prints were not only on the academics societies and community service alone, but also spiritual. He served as an auditor to the Baptist Church he attended at Ile-Ife during his life time.

What manner of man is Professor Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni? Give him any assignment that you think will be too difficult to obtain a solution, Prof. Reuben Ayeni would provide you with solution within the possible shortest time. He held several positions because he knows how to get things done with ease and with available limited resources. Olafenwa, what else can we say about you? The whole world is celebrating you, for a life successfully spent. Unfortunately, you did not tarry enough with us to enjoy the fruits of your labour, to see the children of your biological children, even though you have seen few of those of your academic children but you shall always be remembered by us. Even if we try to forget you, situations, challenges and circumstances will always bring your memory back to us because of your styles of approaches to issues, your boldness and wisdom shall never allow us to forget you. May your gently soul rest in perfect peace.

Adieu!

**A.G. Adeagbo-Sheikh Ph.D.**<sup>15</sup>

#### OUR MAN SULLIVAN

In The JURY we called him Tall Man or "Sullivan" after the very tall very slim (almost thin) Hollywood actor Barry Sullivan, hero of the TV Western series "Tall Man", one of my favourite TV westerns in my early days at GCI. My relationship with Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni began actually in the third year after my graduation when I came back to the Department as a teaching assistant to meet him and Tunde (Otus) Otunubi already on ground as graduate assistants I recognized Ayeni as the young man I had helped to solve a maths problem some three years earlier in the University Library when he was in Part I and I in Part III. The three of us got used to each other very quickly and soon we were so fond of each other that we were doing almost everything together. There was also Kayode Adeboye (a.k.a R.K.) with whom I came in as teaching assistant. I was quite close to him but for other reasons he was not as footloose or able to move freely around as the three of us were.

We named our group of three "The JURY" because we used to sit on matters affecting anyone of us to come up with recommendations for solutions to the problem. Ayeni was invaluable at these sessions because of his unusual ability to judge situations. His verdict could

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be sometimes outrageous but events often proved him right. He was a strategist. Maybe it was this gift situation coupled with a nature that never saw what to fear in anything at all, that made him take decisions that sometimes other people would consider reckless but which he would get away with.

In the JURY G3, we never let anything come between us, women or whatever, least of all, money. Each of us was ready to make the group happy with what he had and Sullivan could be quite generous with his money. He also had a powerful sense of humour that people who were not close enough would not suspect. We used to love a beer or two on occasions and when there was one feat he used to do which I can not resist mentioning. Tall Man would not touch his beer when we others were drinking and when we were ready to go we would say to him, "saddle your bronc" which, in cowboy language means "take charge of your affairs". As we made move to get up, he would stretch his hand to pick up his bottle. Between the time we began rise from our seats and were fully stretched in standing position, he had gulped the entire content of the bottle. He did this hitchlessly every time! It summarized the extra-ordinary nature he had, the nature of not seeing any big deal in anything that was there to do no matter how highly risky the thing looked.

Even when Otus and Ayeni left for Ibadan Polytechnic and I remained at Ife we remained close. Some separation came when they left for the US, Tall Man first, then Otus. Unfortunately, Otun died in the US. May his soul rest in perfect peace.

Dr. Ayeni was already in Nigeria for about six years when I came from Britain. He was the Acting Head in the Department of Mathematics at Ife. He actually employed me back into the Department. He gave me all the support I needed, may God bless him. When he was appointed Professor at LAUTECH Ogbomosho he invited me along and I was there for a year before I decided to come back to Ife. Since then it had been occasional visits and calls until the Tall Man left us suddenly. May his soul rest in perfect peace.

Well, Tall Mean Sullivan, with your departure The Jury has further thinned out. It was first Otus, now it is you and eventually, probably within the next century, it will be me! But you made it big. This is evidenced in the fact that this special edition of our great journal is in your honour. We thank God. So until we meet to part no more, greet Otus for me and tell him we have missed him a lot. Have a good time together.

**Dr. Sikiru Adigun SANNI<sup>16</sup>**

**R. O. AYENI: AN ASTUTE MATHEMATICIAN**

Professor Ayeni was an astute mathematician with unflinching zeal to achieve academic excellence; and develop others in the same direction.

He answered to the letter, the duties of an academic, namely: Teaching, Research and Service.

**His teaching** prowess can best be measured by a statement from an undergraduate female student: 'Enikeni ti Dr. Ayeni ba ko, ti ko ba ye, ko si eni t'ole ko onitohun mo l'aye'. This interpretes as: 'Whoever Dr. Ayeni teaches, without him understanding, can never be taught by any other person to understand'. As his MSc student, I throw my weight behind that statement. I have had to consult his ever detailed lecture notes over and over for lecture and research purposes.

In **research arena**, Professor Ayeni stands as a colossus. Apart from his numerous research contributions to the academia, Professor Ayeni has helped to train and bring up many worthy academics in his own field of research. He was an inspiration even to other upcoming academics, who did not work with him. I make bold that he taught me how to carry out research. Professor Ayeni supervised his students with unparalleled passion. I still remember vividly how he used to pick one of his research students from his (the student) residence to the University, work with him, and then bring him back to his (the student) residence after 11 p.m. almost on daily basis. The result speaks for itself: Professor Ayeni has produced at least 25 PhD and 50 MSc graduates.

**His services** put him as a relentless and tireless worker. He served a number of Universities in various categories. From Departmental Heads to Dean of Students Affairs to Chairman Committee of Deans and Provosts. He served as the President of the Mathematical Association of Nigeria, the Nigerian Mathematical Society and Nigerian Association of Mathematical Physics. On national dimension, he was Chairman of the panel set up by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) to provide curriculum on Mathematics for primary and secondary schools.

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The curriculum the panel came up with has since transformed into syllabus presently being used by both WAEC and NECO.

**Away from the academia:** Professor Ayeni was a very humble person. I have never known him to be given to any form of arrogance. He is always ready to help in whatever way possible. Apart from striving to ensure I got some financial support (which includes a Postgraduate Fellowship) during my MSc programme, he facilitated my first appointment as an academic. He wrote many recommendations on me, with consummate sense of timing, than I can remember. I have missed a teacher, a friend and a father.

**ADEYEYE Idowu Folorunsho (Foly)**<sup>17</sup>

LATE PROF. R. O. AYENI: THE GREAT MATHEMATICIAN

I worked with Late Professor Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni in the year 1982 as an administrative staff. He was the Head of Department of Mathematics, Obafemi Awolowo University; Ile-Ife, Nigeria for three years (1983 - 1986). During his headship there was rapid promotion for members of staff in the Department.

Most of the students he supervised are now Ph.D. holders and Professors of Mathematics both in Nigeria and abroad.

During his life time he shared his acquired knowledge with learners and led the Department successfully. He provided both moral and financial assistance to his students.

The love and respect were not limited to students alone but also to every human being that he came across. Late Professor Ayeni, the great Mathematician succeeded by dint of hard work in his academic achievement as presented during his inaugural lecture at Ladoke Akintola University of Sciences and Technology, Ogbomoso in Oyo State, Nigeria. Late Professor Ayeni left behind meaningful memories that will never be forgotten. Professor Reuben Olafenwa Ayeni your untimely death is painful.

**Prof. O. K. KORIKO**<sup>18</sup>

LATE AYENI TOUCHED THE LIVES OF ALL

Sir, you passed through the world of Mathematics like a colossus. You gave hope to the determined.

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You encouraged the distressed to succeed.  
 You gave your all to the people that came across you.  
 You touched the lives of all and sundry both in your neighbourhood  
 and in the diaspora who had anything to do with you positively.  
 You came, You saw and You conquered.  
 You were a rare Gem.  
 Goodnight sir.

**THE ACTING HEAD OF DEPT. (S. O. AJADI Ph.D.)<sup>19</sup>**

**A GREAT MATHEMATICIAN AND TEACHER**

The news of the death of **Prof. (Chief) R. O. Ayeni** came as a rude shock particularly to some of us who have known him over the years as a towering academic figure with positive disposition to humanity. Very few teachers get to impact positively not only on the academic landscape of their community but of their country. His impact was vast. As a leader, he made significant efforts to change his world for good by producing other leaders. There is no doubt that Prof. Ayeni has made significant impact on the sands of time going by the number of graduate students he produced during his lifetime. Some of these graduates are trailblazers within and outside the country.

As a mathematician and teacher, he made significant efforts to impact and diffuse knowledge even beyond mathematical sciences. His love for the young ones is unprecedented. He will be remembered not only for being a Professor of Mathematics, but also for the determination and resilience with which he carried out all his duties throughout his academic life.

As an academic grandson, I have benefitted immensely from him as he was always there for me. He served as my external examiner at the Oral defense of my M.Sc. and Ph.D. examinations. He was a tireless personality who will always put service above self. A highly detribalized Nigerian who built bridges across many divides in the mathematical world.

He was a visiting Professor to many Nigerian Universities including the Obafemi Awolowo University, where he served as an external examiner for Mathematics programme and postgraduate examinations. As we mourn his exit, we are consoled by the fact that he left an indelible footprint and we also take pride in his legacies.

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