

Enugwu-Agidi Progressive Union, USA presents

The EPU-USA

Quarterly Newsletter

August, 2022

Issue# 002

2022 EPU-USA Convention in Washington, D.C.



2022 EPU-USA Convention in Washington DC-The Beginning of Our Renaissance

By

Dr. Chinedu Ikeanyi

Many things in life, including associations, go through stages and cycles during its existence. There is time to be strong, mild, weak, low and strong again. Enugwu-Agidi Progressive Union (EPU-USA) also operates within the same natural cycles. When our association was founded in 1996 in Dallas, Texas, it marked the best thing that has ever happened to Enugwu-Agidi people in the USA. Prior to the formation, our people were relating with one another in loose fashion but the association as envisioned brought so much excitement, camaraderie and structure to our activities as a group of people from same town. It also became the rallying point for our community pride and everyone felt included.

After approximately 15 years of uninterrupted joy, vibrant engagement, and collaboration, we began to experience our own “midlife crisis.” Our interest in the affairs of the association began to wane as murmurings and fatigue set in. Our pioneer members became too involved with raising their children, life began to happen, and new members were not attracted as more Enugwu-Agidi people immigrated to the United States. While many people witnessed the change and expressed concerns privately, they did not take the necessary steps to address the cause (s) of the fading interest in our association.

Then in 2018, EPU-USA held its convention in Atlanta under the leadership of Engr. Vince Okonkwo, the immediate past President of our association. The indefatigable Atlanta Branch, which has always been the bedrock of our association, did not attract the usual high volume of participation. Then the soul-searching commenced to determine what was amiss.

Engr. Vince Okonkwo, a well-respected and quintessential gentleman, who speaks mostly through his actions decided to convene the EPU-USA Peace and Unity Committee to investigate the causes of apathy within the association and proffer solutions on how to rekindle the interest of members. The Committee which he set up immediately after the 2018 Atlanta Convention completed its task in December 2019. However, the effort to implement its findings was hampered by COVID-19 Pandemic which also prevented the 2020 Bi-annual convention scheduled in Washington DC.

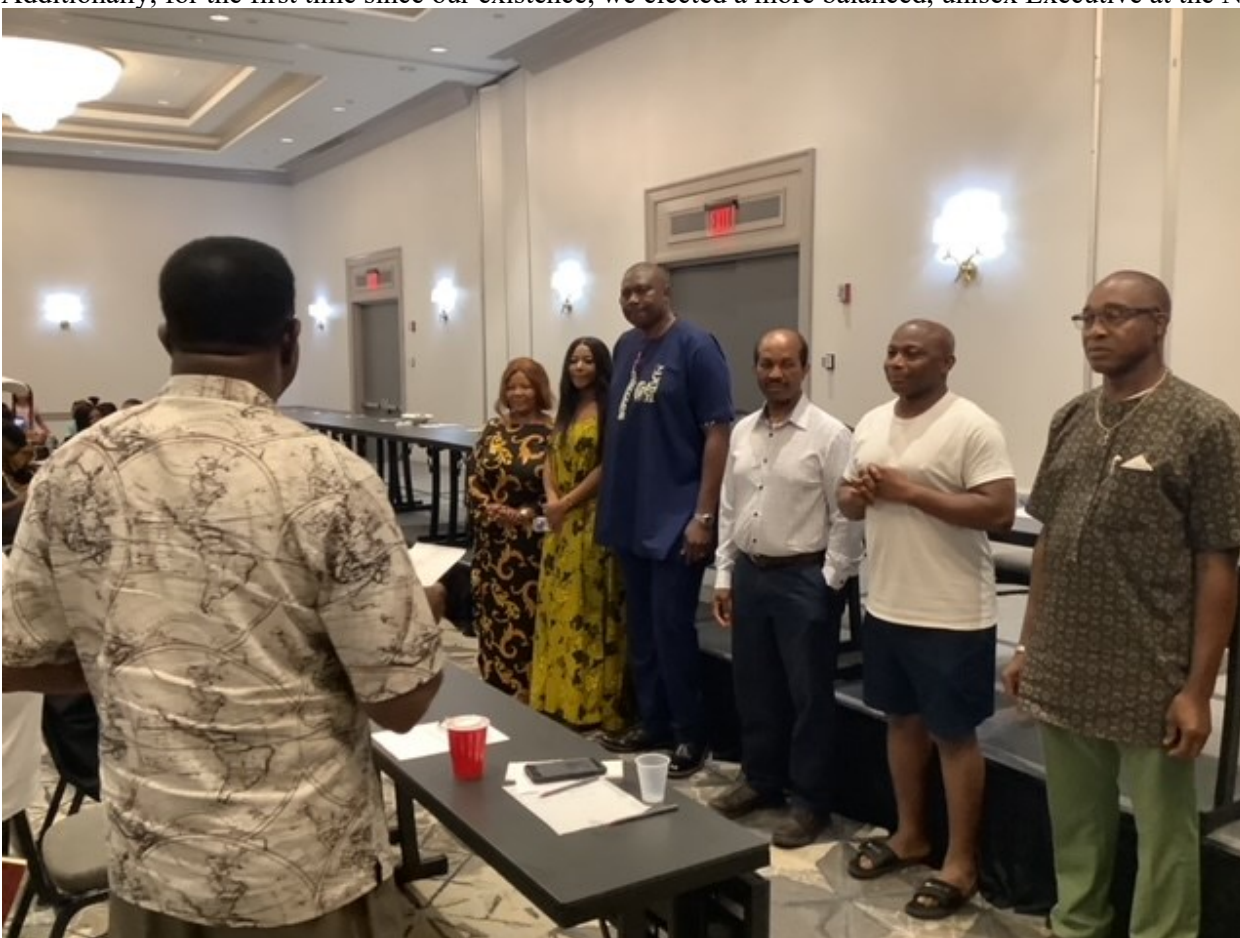
As the cycle of life continues, EPU-USA witnessed its renaissance or rebirth with the just concluded 2022 Convention in Washington DC. We are back! Our 2022 Convention which was hosted by EPU-DC Branch made up of Maryland, District of Columbia and Northern Virginia under the Chairmanship of Chief Chike Nwankwo and his able executive, was the best convention we have had in recent memory. Yes, it was off the chart!



As someone who has missed only one convention since 1996, it is my empirical opinion that our DC Convention was a huge success based on what we were able to accomplish as an organization, not necessarily on the size of the crowd, which was equally impressive. The vision of EPU-DC Branch, which was embraced and adopted by the National Executive to build a befitting hospital for our town reignited the flame which culminated in the largest fundraising ever experienced by our association. Immediately after Vince Okonkwo's led executive handed over to the newly elected President, Sir Sunny Okoye (Oba Enugwu-Agidi) on Friday, July 1, 2022 at the end of our meeting, Oba raised more than \$114,000 for the hospital project within one hour by calling on members to donate generously to our hospital project.

The fundraising continued the next day, on Saturday, July 2, 2022, during our Gala night. At the end of the night, a pledge of over \$161,000 was received, out of which over \$25,000 has been redeemed.

Additionally, for the first time since our existence, we elected a more balanced, unisex Executive at the National level to lead our association for the



next two years. Three out of the eight national executive officers are females, including the Vice President, Mrs. Ifeyinwa Okoye. This great move makes our leadership rank a more inclusive representation of an association made up of both male and female members. Moreover, our DC hosts gave us a shocking, but pleasant surprise. We never expected that our famous Ijele Masquerade would travel all the way from Enugwu-Agidi to the United States to entertain us. This is the real difference between a human tourist and a spirit, who does not need a visa. Ijele Enugwu-Agidi was on top of its game and our people opened their wallets to graciously appreciate its presence. The Ijele appearance was followed by the crowd-pleasing performance of our elegant EPU-DC women in their dazzling gold and red uniform. Everyone was forced to their feet to spray them with dollars. Their performance confirmed the belief that women are vital to the success of any association or event.

Certain things in life are better experienced than imagined. Mindful of this, our wonderful EPU-DC hosts arranged for us to visit the National Museum of African American History

and Culture (NMAAHC) to experience history, firsthand. Loaded on two luxurious buses, we embarked on the tour that lasted about six hours at the facility. The tour was so well organized that we were able to visit all the important sections within a record time. We were treated like VIPs with little or no time wasted in long lines where other guests were tied up. For instance, we would have waited in line for at least one-hour to see Emmitt Till's section, but our admission was express. Special thanks to Attorney Emeke Okekeuche, who coordinated the tour with the assistance of Mrs. Nonye Nwankwo and Ozo Chike Nwankwo.

One piece of history that has stuck with me since the visit is the Bight of Biafra. Do you know that the Igbos constitute one quarter of the slaves who were forcibly and brutally removed from Africa to the New World during the slave trade? This aspect of our history even though sad, has renewed my love and admiration for our African American brothers and sisters.

For the knowledge of every indigene of Enugwu-Agidi in the United States, following resolutions were reached and it is binding on **any true son or daughter** of Enugwu-Agidi resident in the USA to meet these obligations:

- ❖ \$2000 - mandatory levy due on or before June 30, 2024
- ❖ \$1000 – first installment of this levy due on or before December 30, 2022
- ❖ Any amount of voluntary donation over and above the levy will be greatly appreciated.
- ❖ Payments could be made by sending the levy or donation via Zelle to:
Epuusahospitalproject@gmail.com
Or Pay into Bank of America (B of A) Account #: 003347869631 Routing #: 061000052
If writing a check, make it payable to “EPU-USA” and contact Sir Don Anigbogu, the Financial Secretary, regarding where to send mail your check.

Setting aside at least one hundred dollars (\$100) per month for a period of two years to save at least one life in Enugwu-Agidi is a legacy worth fighting for. Our parents built the current maternity in 1971 with little or nothing, and we can do better with all of our accomplishments and exposure. Let's go to work for Enugwu-Agidi in our lifetime and strive to live up to our parents' expectations. We can do it if we truly commit to it. According to Barak Obama, *“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for.”*

The goal of EPU-USA is to begin the new hospital project this December 2022 and then continue rapidly until completed and furnished in less than two years. The new leadership of EPU-USA is appealing to all the sons and daughters of Enugwu-Agidi, our in-laws, friends, and colleagues to assist us in this urgent need to provide adequate health services for our people. So many untimely and preventable deaths are occurring in our beloved town every day as we watch idly and do nothing. As a people of conscience, we have supported so many communities here in the USA with our generous donations, it is time to engage their assistance in building a hospital for our town. As the new President, Sir Sunny Okoye, has promised, the names of donors will be published at the hospital for eternity based on their category of donations.

During the Gala night at the Convention, as we were carried away with joy, the MC neglected to acknowledge the illustrious sons and daughter of Enugwu-Agidi as well as the Chairman of the occasion, Dr. Chiedu Mbonu, from Nawfia who received Congressional Recognition for their philanthropic contribution in many areas, particularly in support for healthcare services.

Other recipients include Chief (Dr.) Christian Nnamdi Nwankwo, Attorney Emeke Edward Okekeuche, and Dr. (Mrs) Ngozi Ugochukwu.

Finally, EPU-USA has regained its past glory with the initiation of the hospital project by Engr. Vince Okonkwo, our immediate past president; Sir Sunny Okoye (Oba) and his current administration are fired up to lead us to the Promise land of providing quality healthcare in Enugwu-Agidi with the groundbreaking in December 2022.

Congratulations to EPU-USA! The giant has risen again!

[Dr. Chinedu Ikeanyi is writing from California branch of EPU-USA](#)

Summer Doldrums, August Meetings and my Personal Musings

By
Bosah Okoye

This summer is one like non other in recent memory in Nigeria and for Nigerians both at home and in the diaspora. Reduced mobility because of insecurity imposed by Buhari's distributive national banditry. The ASUU endless strike, which laid bare the administrations lack of interest in the welfare of Nigeria's families and future. Nigeria is at crossroads as the legacy of this administration will again as in 1983 be misery, poverty, ethnic bigotry, nepotism and hate compounded by an unprecedented level of distrust of government and its organs. A summer like non other indeed.

In the midst of these challenges and the current reality, our historically resilient people still find ways to remind us of what our normal times used to be like. The onslaught on, and against our way of life emanating from heartless rulers with anti-indigenous people's agendas could not stop a people who must bend their environment to their collective will. The prime example is the recently concluded August meeting of Enugwu-Agidi women. Their efforts did inject a semblance of normalcy and sanity in our community against all odds, and practically remind us once again of who we have always been. A resilient, caring and God-fearing people. We are not a perfect, as a people but we strive for the better angels in us. I commend our women for insisting on living and making us all proud. Our women are the best that you can find anywhere. We are blessed with great wives,



mothers, sisters, daughters and nurturers. On behalf of our people and readers of this Newsletter, I thank and congratulate the women of Enugwu Agidi.

As I watch, observe and reflect, it has become abundantly clear to me that the wicked forces against our way of life are formidable and relentless. Our wives, mothers and sisters strive to give our community a sense of normalcy, I hope the men focused on making sure that our families and continue will continue to be safe. We cannot afford to not have planned measures in place to safeguard our place from the trend and new industry of distributive banditry ravaging Nigeria through collusion by a criminal gang at the helm of our national affairs.

Villages, Clans and our Town must establish an alert and response system for times of emergency. This process should be granular and must be constantly simulated, rehearsed and practiced over and over until it becomes second nature to the people manning the system (Youth leaders, Village or Ward leaders), who are designated to communicate and alert the community channels. The channels on receiving alerts of ongoing or imminent threats will thereby activate already practiced responses to slow, mitigate or neutralize the threat, while minimizing confusion and over exposure of our people.

We can do this by an internal response handbook. This is the ultimate self-preservation step any community can embark on at this time. Time is of the essence. The wolf is at the door.

God Bless and help us.

Akalutu.

[Bosah Okoye is writing from Washington D.C. branch of EPU-USA](#)

This second edition of EPU-USA Quarterly Newsletter is provided by courtesy of the EPU-USA Internet & Information Committee and RitBridge Info Tech.