

# UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Professor Vincent Idemyor To Be Bestowed The Donald E. Francke Medal For International Contributions To Advance Pharmacy Practice**

Professor Vincent Idemyor is this year's recipient of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Board of Directors' Donald E. Francke Medal. The award will be presented at the December 4, 2023 meeting of the ASHP, in Anaheim, California. Idemyor is a professor at the University of Port Harcourt in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

His dedication led to an appointment as a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Visiting Senior Fellow at the University of Port Harcourt in 2009. This was made possible through one of the grants from the MacArthur Foundation to the University of Port Harcourt.

The Francke Medal, is given to individuals for "significant international contributions that the nominee has made to advance pharmacy practice." Professor Vincent Idemyor has done extensive work for the last 15 years in Nigeria. Prior to that, he worked for 20 years at major hospitals/academic institutions in Chicago, Illinois. He is an authority on HIV/AIDS and on the role, science plays in the advancement of medical treatment.

The ASHP announcement of the award notes, "Dr. Idemyor has made sustained contributions to international pharmacy practice, particularly in improving outcomes for patients with HIV/AIDS. Throughout the course of his career, he has led and collaborated on numerous projects that significantly improved healthcare access and outcomes for medically underserved populations in the United States, Nigeria, and other African countries."

Professor Vincent Idemyor's work includes being instrumental in starting a faculty of pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Port Harcourt. In 2006, he was engaged by the United Nations Development Programme to evaluate providers of a nationwide program in Nigeria that delivered services related to HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Idemyor is extensively published in peer-reviewed journals and is co-editor of the 3rd edition of Drug Discovery and Development. (CRC, 2020)

**The Francke Medal Lecture**, that Idemyor will deliver is titled: “Translational Research and Implementation Science: Accelerating the Imperative.” The lecture is an intensive and scholarly look at the importance of the timely translation of what scientists observe in their research, into practical gains for humanity. For example, if we strongly suspect there will be wide-spread starvation from climate change, how do we most efficiently and effectively translate what we already know to design a plan to address famine. In addition, the climate effect may lead to increased prevalence of water-borne illnesses, and other infectious diseases.

Professor Idemyor will discuss the efforts to rapidly develop and deploy the vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infections, as an example of the success of accelerated translation and implementation of scientific gains. He will contrast timely implementation with implementation that sometimes takes centuries. He will also note the important role played by the concept of the Triple Helix: “Adequate application of the triple helix concept, with its emphasis on collaboration among academia, industry, and government, greatly influences the rate of progress. Progress in resource-limited settings will depend on nurturing leaders with advanced skills in translational research and implementation science.”

Professor Idemyor will comment on the role to be played by practitioners and scientists in confronting the health and well-being challenges that are his continual focus. He will note that, “In a sense, the pressure is on us as practitioners and researchers whose fields are grounded in science-based conclusions. We are the ones that ultimately the policymakers will listen to, as governmental budgets are made. Science will win because science is grounded in incontrovertible realities.”

Professor Idemyor recently participated in a panel discussion of the Nigeria Higher Education Foundation at the Harvard Club in New York. In his presentation, he stressed the role of Triple Helix, one of his key themes in the encompassing view of science, education, and progress in the field of healthcare that he holds and will be featured in his Francke Medal lecture.

**Dr. Donald Eugene Francke** (1910-1978) was a man known as a “reformer by nature, doer by necessity.” (Worthen DB 2003). Dr. Francke was renowned for his creation and implementation of ideas. Upon his passing, the journal he had founded, *Drug Intelligence and Clinical Pharmacy*, published a series of remembrances, noting, “Another great virtue was his intellectual endurance. At the time his well-known contemporaries were passing the baton to a new generation, Francke was still generating an endless stream of new ideas and causing many of them to be implemented or adopted.”

Professor Vincent Idemyor is available for comments and interviews. In Nigeria: 0703-802-3096