



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers

## PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



e-newsletter

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website: [www.nseph.org](http://www.nseph.org)

e-mail: [info@nseph.org](mailto:info@nseph.org)

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### Interview with Engr. Mrs. Chinwe Okoronkwo

**Engr. Mrs. Chinwe Okoronkwo, MNSE, is a Civil Engineer. She is an Executive Committee member of the Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt Branch.**

**E-Newsletter:** *Madam, as a female engineer, what would you have to say about women participation in engineering?*

**Chinwe:** This question came at the right time considering that the world over just celebrated women either during the Mothering Sunday or the International Women's Day. Back to your question, many women have distinguished themselves in the practice of Engineering be it within and outside the shores of this country. Women have been involved in both design and construction in different fields of Engineering. The participation of women in engineering is as old as the profession, before engineering was recognized as a formal profession; women with engineering skills often sought recognition as inventors. One of the earliest women inventors was Hypatia of Alexandria, who is credited with the invention of the hydrometer. Tabitha Babbitt was an American toolmaker who invented the first circular saw. Sarah Guppy was an English woman who patented a design for bridge foundations. Mary Dixon Kies was the first American woman to receive a patent for her method of weaving straw. In Nigeria, we also have women who have excelled in the field of Engineering. To mention but a few, we have people like Engr. Ebele O. Okeke, who became not only the first female to occupy the position of the Head of the Civil Services of the Federation but also the first Engineer to hold this esteemed position. She was inducted into the Nigerian Women Hall of Fame in November, 2007. Engineering is the application of science and math to solve problems. Our economy is presently in a state of transformation, and the education we provide to scientists and engineers must



Chinwe Okoronkwo

prepare them to move beyond merely fulfilling a technical function to becoming leaders in making wise decisions about technology and in setting policies that will foster innovation. As the nation works to develop the science, Engineering and technology leaders of the future, I think that women represent a critically needed but mostly untapped resource. To this end, I will suggest that more effort be put in encouraging more girls to study and practice engineering as well as giving more female engineers the opportunity to prove their abilities. We all know that whatever a woman puts her hand to do; she does it with passion and above all excels in it (that does not mean we don't have women who are failures). Women in engineering have been subjected to many rigorous activities during their study and training as Engineers in school. The drive to succeed in most of their challenges is already in them. After all, engineering is all about coping with societal challenges making the environment a better place. What you see the women in engineering do outside is an outcome of their tough training and the drive to succeed

**E-Newsletter:** *What advice do you have for young women with regards to studying and becoming engineers?*

**Chinwe:** My word for them is that once they desire to be engineers, they should let anything or anyone deter them. As it is written in the bible; Luke 9:62 "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God". Engineering is a very interesting as well as a noble profession. Engineers are inventors; they dream up ideas and make them a reality for society.

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NSE Port Harcourt Branch Executive Committee surprise birthday visit to Engr. I. Z. S. Akobo, MNSE (8th from left).



## Inventor of Email Passes On

**Raymond Tomlinson** is widely known for inventing network electronic mail, choosing the “@” sign in emails to connect the username with the destination address. His email software (SNDMSG) was widely distributed for years, and proved to be an exceptionally innovative solution. Tomlinson was also lead in developing the required services in network electronic mail, including defining a place to put inbound email on the user's machine, developing a mail transport agent to move email between machines, creating a protocol for moving email between machines, setting a standard format for email messages, and designing a tool for creating and reading email. In addition to his significant contributions to network email, he played a leading role in developing the first email standards. In 1972, Tomlinson was one of the participants in a meeting to enhance FTP to support email, which was used until 1982 when it was replaced by SMTP. In addition, Tomlinson was a co-author of RFC-561 (September 1973), the first standard for Internet email message formats. RFC 561 defined several of the email fields we still use today (e.g. From, Subject and Date).

## Interview with Engr. Mrs. Chinwe

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It might not be easy at the beginning but with perseverance they will succeed. All that is needed is the right foundation. By this I mean they need to be friendly with subjects like mathematics and physics as a minimum. They don't need to wait till the senior classes to be friendly with these subjects as the basics which are taught in the junior classes will be required for a proper understanding in the senior classes. It might seem as if Engineering is a course left exclusively for the male folks, in fact, many men including women still believe that engineering is a man's job. Being trained as an Engineer equips one properly for life. Like I said earlier, everything in our world revolves around the noble profession of Engineering. With training in Engineering, one is truly equipped for life. I will advise our young women who have the zeal to study and practice engineering that they should strive to be innovators and patent their works. They should think of ways of applying their Engineering training and knowledge to solve problems and as well as developing new ways of doing things. There may be workplace discrimination against women; it is not new in engineering and engineering organizations but always remember that some ladies have studied Engineering, qualified as Engineers and are practicing Engineering. In Nigeria, there is an umbrella body of Women practicing Engineering - Association of Professional Women Engineers (APWEN) as well as the Society of Women Engineers in the international scene. To you young intending women Engineers, I say; “Have confidence in yourself and be diligent at work. Be friendly and always strive for perfection in your assignments. Surely, you will gain the confidence of many and be able to achieve your goals.”

E-Newsletter: *Thank you madam.*

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Port Harcourt Branch

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**VENUE:** Engr. Ishmael A. Banigo Secretariat, Water Works Yard, #3 Bernard Carr Street, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

**FEE: (N50,000) PER PARTICIPANT**  
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**TARGET PARTICIPANTS:** ▶ Engineers, Off/On-Shore/Rig Workers, Oil and Gas Operators, Engineers in Government Sector, Project Managers, Allied Professionals.

TO REGISTER, KINDLY CONTACT: Engr. Promise Jumbo on 08037961001, Mr. Sylvester on 08038687923  
Email: admin@nseph.org, promopj@yahoo.com or NSE Secretariat.

**PAYMENT FOR THE WORKSHOP SHOULD BE MADE INTO:**  
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### NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!

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