

# Students Urged to Explore Opportunities in Tourism Industry

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*Notwithstanding the seeming lack of commitment on the part of government to develop tourist attractions in the country, experts have encouraged graduates to latch onto opportunities that abound in the Nigerian tourism industry rather than searching for the elusive white collar jobs.*

Mr. Etim Akpan and Mrs. Adebimpe Lawal, Head Training and Destination Training Expert respectively at Liberty Tourism Limited, Lagos, gave the advice on Wednesday, March 22, 2017, at the third Town and Gown seminar of the Department of Economics and Social Development Studies, Covenant University.

The duo in different presentations on the topic, 'Unlocking the Economics of the Global Tourism Industry: Prospects and Opportunities for the Nigerian

Graduate,' were unanimous in their submissions that vast exploration of the tourism industry by both the government and private individuals can help Nigeria come out of the current economic recession.

Mr. Akpan said at the gathering, comprised of students, members of faculty and staff of the Economics Department that tourism has more opportunities for Nigeria than oil, because oil is a fixed resource but one can keep recreating in tourism.

He defined tourism as the business of industry providing information, accommodation, transportation and other services to people for the purpose of leisure travel, hospitality and pleasure, with the components of the tourism industry being airports, standard hotels, functional airlines, tourist attractions, culture and the people and travel agencies.

While listing countries in Africa that are developing their tourism industries to include Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Egypt, Mr. Akpan said that there are more opportunities in Nigeria as most of the opportunities are unexplored.

"We can open up Nigeria to tourism by having tourism villages in different parts of the country and invite foreigners to come and have unforgettable experience. We can build desert safari in Borno State, which has plenty of sand dunes," he averred.

On her part, Mrs. Lawal said that graduates in tourism can work independently and grow to employ people. She urged graduates to take a look around them wherever they may be in the country and identify things they can develop to attract tourists.

Prospects in the Nigerian travel industry, she said, are local travel arrangements for Nigerians and non-Nigerians living within Nigeria; local tours for Nigerians in the Diaspora; and tourism as a foreign exchange earner/economic booster. She noted that graduates can specialize in visa assistance and protocol service, hotel and tour arrangements, international tour arrangements among others.

According to Mrs. Lawal, there are also unlimited opportunities, which are vast networking, traveling globally, to be an employer of labour, high income generator, opportunity to create and innovate and the chance to explore various frontiers.



Head Training, Mr. Etim Akpan (5th L) and Destination Training Expert, Mrs. Adebimpe Lawal (4th L), both of Liberty Tourism Limited, (Guest Speakers) with Members of Economics and Development Studies Department's Town and Gown Seminar

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Earlier in his welcome address, the Head, Department of Economics and Social Development Studies, Dr. Evans Osabuohien, said that the third Town and Gown seminar of his department in the Omega Semester was particularly crucial because the focus in the past editions had been on banking, agriculture and the Small and Medium Scale Entrepreneurs.

“Now we have tourism, said to be the largest and most dynamic industry in the world. Out of every 12 jobs created in the world, one comes from the tourism sector,” said the HOD, who appreciated the guest speakers and the Town and Gown Committee of the Economics department for their efforts.

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