

Generations of STEM: Francisca Okeke

Physicist

A physicist by training, Professor Okeke represents firsts in many areas, including the first female department head of a university in Nigeria and the first female Dean in the Faculty of Physical Sciences also at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Mentored early in life by her father and his love of math and science, she quickly found her path in the field of physics. Her main subject of study is how the sun affects the ionosphere, which is the ionized upper levels of the Earth's atmosphere. Studying the interactions of the sun, ionosphere, and the Earth's magnetic fields can help scientists to better understand climate change.

In her role at the University, she has advocated for hiring women faculty and works to encourage young women in the STEM fields. She continues to supervise PhD students and research geomagnetism and equatorial electrojet phenomena.

Professor Okeke believes that it's important for women scientists to be visible, to encourage other women to go to college and follow the career path.



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