

Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project Highlights

February 2020

Scholar Program 72

MY EXPERIENCE AS A VISITING SCHOLAR IN SOIL RESOURCES PRACTICAL

I was privileged to come to Michigan State University (MSU) under the USAID funded Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project as a visiting scholar. This opportunity has opened me up to a whole new experience which I will forever cherish.

MSU is indeed a citadel of research and learning where students are exposed to modern methods and means of solving current issues with practical and sustainable solutions. The classroom setting is a “wow”, equipped with state-of-the-art learning facilities that will facilitate learning.

As a visiting scholar, I took courses on soil resources. This was an excellent and rewarding opportunity to work in a lively, critical and highly international environment, and this has contributed to expanding my understanding of soils. The class is 70% practical and 30% theory. As part of the practical, we went to the Crop and Soil Science Teaching and Research, Agronomy Farm for practical on soil profile.



Prof. James Crum describing soil profile to the students

I was really surprised; it was not the way I had been taught to do soil profile. What I had learned was to excavate a 2m

x 2m x 2m section of soil to examine the soil horizons. This method is really tasking and fatigue.

At MSU, I learned a simple, better and less stressful way of doing soil profile. This method involved using a shovel to take a portion of soil down the profile and carefully place it on a metal container 2m long and examine the horizons. Using this method, one can do many profile descriptions without much stress. On the farm we did three profile descriptions on three different soil slopes (upper, middle and lower) to check the trends in soil properties down the slope.



Prof. James Crum describing soil profile to the students

It was fun learning and interacting with students and Professor James Crum. I now understand why the slogan of “Who will? Spartans¹ will!” blankets the school. A Spartan

¹ Anyone associated with MSU is a Spartan. For more background see: <http://bit.ly/2vOOEZR>.

is taught how to use all available knowledge, resources and training to change their world and succeed in whatever environment they find themselves.



Philip and Daniel during soil resource practical

by Philip Hegarty James

This work is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Feed the Future initiative through the Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project, Associate Cooperative Agreement Number AJD-620-LA-15-00001. The contents are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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Published by the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State University, Justin S. Morrill Hall of Agriculture, 446 West Circle Dr., Room 202, East Lansing, Michigan 48824.