

# J-K GADZAMA LLP

## NEWSLETTER

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L-R: Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama; Leke Kehinde; Dr. Damilola Adejumo; Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN; Hon. Justice Gladys K. Olotu Hon. Justice John T. Tsoho, Chief Judge of Federal High Court; Hon. Justice Inyang Ekwo; Olumide Babalola and Dr. Reginald Aziza during the 8th Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa JSC (Rtd) Professional Training and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers held at the J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja on Saturday, April 29, 2023.

# Editorial

**Dear esteemed readers,**

In this Volume 40 of our Quarterly Newsletter, we are honored to feature the Keynote Speech delivered by Mr. Michael Jonathan Numa, SAN, who was the esteemed Keynote Speaker at the J-K Gadzama LLP 8th Honourable Justice Chukwudifu Oputa JSC (RTD) Professional Training and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers. His address delves into the intricacies of career options within the legal profession in Nigeria, with a specific focus on breaking into different pathways as a young lawyer.

Mr. Numa emphasizes the significance of mentoring and training young lawyers to uphold professionalism and achieve excellence in the practice of law. He challenges the misconception that dispute resolution lawyers hold superiority over lawyers practicing outside the court or tribunal, acknowledging that transaction lawyers who do not engage in trial advocacy have also made substantial and significant contributions to the development of the law. Addressing the current legal climate in Nigeria, Mr. Numa acknowledges the large number of lawyers and the challenges they face, such as underpayment and limited career options. He stresses the importance of knowledgeable individuals providing guidance and solutions to the issues faced by the legal profession as a whole.

Throughout his speech, Mr. Numa explores various career paths within the legal profession, highlighting the diversity of options available. These paths include general practice, judiciary, law professors and scholars, technology law, transaction attorneys, in-house counsel, academia, alternative dispute resolution, and the bench. He encourages young lawyers to venture beyond traditional avenues and embrace the evolving nature of the field, embracing new opportunities and technologies that are reshaping the legal profession.

In conclusion, Mr. Numa's keynote address provides valuable insights into the multitude of career options within the legal profession. It serves as an encouragement for young lawyers to think beyond conventional paths and embrace the dynamic nature of the field. But this newsletter is not all about breaking into different career pathways for young lawyers. We have a range of exciting and informative features that are sure to captivate our readers. Our Sights and Scenes section brings you the latest happenings from within and outside our firm, while Words on Marble showcases inspiring quotes that are sure to lift your spirits.

Our Photo Speak section brings you a visual narrative of some of our recent events, while our Legal Humor section is guaranteed to put a smile on your face. We also have exciting news from the firm, including updates on our upcoming events and a profile of our staff members who work tirelessly to provide our clients with the highest quality legal services. As always, we are committed to providing our readers with quality and informative content that not only educates but also entertains. We hope you enjoy reading this edition of our Quarterly Newsletter as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future content. As usual, previous editions of our newsletter can be accessed at: <https://j-kgadzamallp.com/publications/newsletters>.

Sincerely,

**Hassan Olalekan Sherif, Esq.**

Editor-in-Chief

# Table of Contents

Page

Career Options in the Legal Profession: Breaking into Different Pathway as a Young Lawyer. By: <b>Michael Jonathan Numa, SAN</b>	03
Sights and Scenes	13
Words on Marble	16
Photo Speak	17
Legal Humour	18
Photo Speak	19
News from the Firm	20
Photo Speak	21
Upcoming Events	22

## **CAREER OPTIONS IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION: BREAKING INTO DIFFERENT PATHWAY AS A YOUNG LAWYER.**

A KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY:

**MICHAEL JONATHAN NUMA, SAN**

AT THE 8TH JUSTICE CHUKWUDIFU OPUTA JSC (RTD) PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND MENTORING PROGRAMME FOR YOUNG LAWYERS

### **INTRODUCTION**

Observe all the protocols including the other speakers.

May I respectfully express my deepest appreciation to our revered Leader; Chief J.K Gadzama, SAN and by extension the entire Management of J.K Gadzama LLP for doing me the honor of inviting me to deliver the keynote address for this August event.

It is pertinent to state unequivocally that the Law Firm of J.K Gadzama LLP has been consistent in championing this worthy course of mentoring and training our young lawyers for the past 8 years, towards professionalism and excellence in the practice of the law, something we cannot overemphasize.

I personally have been a beneficiary of this mentoring series for several years and I am indeed elated to be on this side of the divide, having the privilege of speaking to the future of our profession. As you know I only left this class of young lawyers recently but I still subject myself to the continuous training and mentoring that our leader, Chief J.K Gadzama, SAN affords.

I will share my thoughts on this topic substantially as a dispute resolution attorney, but let me make haste to state that the perception that dispute resolution attorneys are somewhat superior to lawyers who practice law outside the court or tribunal is completely false.

Transaction attorneys who do not engage in trial advocacy before courts or tribunals have contributed immensely to the development of the law. As a matter of fact lawyers who have structured themselves as transaction advisors have demonstrated better organizational structure and built better institutions that will stand the test time of time in my opinion than most dispute resolution law firms in Nigeria.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF THE LEGAL CLIMATE IN NIGERIA**

A recent publication on the Nigerian Bar Association website states that at present, Nigeria has over 140,000 lawyers on its roll with the Nigerian law school churning out about 4000 lawyers yearly after sitting for the bar examination. Whilst we boast of being one of the largest Bar Associations in Africa as a whole, we are still boasting of being one of the most underpaid professionals in the country with

many lawyers seeking to ambush resorting to ambulance chasing civil disputes and recovery of debts as a source of income. This shows that many people are not properly advised, and we require the assistance and knowledgeable individuals to direct our course. For this reason, I am appreciative of the event organizers for taking the initiative to proffer solutions to the issues that the legal profession is currently experiencing in Nigeria.

The legal profession, though one of the oldest professions in the world, has evolved through the years, and it, in fact, takes on the character of whoever is willing to study and explore it. This is to say that the career opportunities that abound in the legal profession are inexhaustible because the law can never be dispensed with in every aspect of human endeavor, development, civilization or innovation.

The sad reality is that many newly qualified lawyers quickly lose interest in their chosen field. The expectations that drove the students to spend endless nights studying just phases away but majority persist because they want to fit in. Given the conventional professional routes followed by prior generations, when partnership was simpler to reach and devotion to an employer ensured better job security, this should hardly come as a surprise.

However, those who are passionate about the legal system have a wide choice of employment opportunities available to them in the large field of law. Lawyers can work in various settings, including law firms, corporations, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and in private practice. Lawyers typically specialize in one or more areas of law, such as criminal law, civil law, corporate law, family law, or intellectual property, among others.

Nonetheless, in the Nigerian legal market, there are three major umbrellas where the vast number of lawyers churned out by the Nigerian law school each year have camped, because our focus is majorly on these areas where we have the misplaced notion that there are too many lawyers in Nigeria. The three groups are;

- a. Lawyers in general practice - The most common career path in law. Here, there is no expertise, no key subject area, these lawyers will take on any brief: civil, criminal, the mix etcetera is to become a lawyer. A general practitioner working with no expertise; they provide legal advice and representation to clients in legal matters.
- b. Judges and other Judicial Officials- For those who are interested in the judicial system, a career as a judge or other judicial position is usually a viable option. Judges are responsible for presiding over court cases, interpreting and applying the law, and making decisions in legal disputes. Other judicial officials, such as court clerks and bailiffs, perform administrative tasks and support the court process.
- c. Law Professors and Scholars - another prominent career path is to become law professors or scholars. Law professors teach legal concepts and theories at

universities and colleges while producing research that contributes to the development of legal scholarship.

It is quite disappointing that many lawyers believe that these are the only viable career options, especially in a world where opportunities that we didn't even know existed a few years ago are now opening. For example, in recent years, there has been a technology wave that is sweeping the young people away. Many attorneys I meet believe that their decision to pursue a career in law has limited their options, but this is untrue because the 21st century has created a plethora of opportunities in a variety of fields that lawyers can genuinely explore.

When Mark Yacano discussed the transition in view of the legal profession from a practice to "vendorization," seeing our services traded exactly like that of the vendors with lawyers bidding on transactions, he succinctly summarized the current situation of the legal profession. I'll encourage the upcoming generation, like any trader, to find the loopholes in the new legal market and close them so that we can advance. I believe that rather than a completely new set of abilities, freshly graduated lawyers currently need information and the improvement of the skills we have.

The COVID-19 virus was intended to be a change-catalyst, and for many professions in Nigeria, it was. Nevertheless, for some reason, legal professionals have once again lagged in embracing new opportunities since 2020 to the present. As the courts were shut down during the lockdown, litigation was practically impossible, forcing cases to be dropped, we were unable to adapt and use the alternative channels other professionals were employing to market their services.

These changes are not just limited to how things are done; the economic crisis of the world which has been a key indicator of the four revolutionary stages of the world is largely upon us and should have at least given lawyers the chance to experiment with and put into practice cutting-edge methods of marketing their services.

Every revolution the world has experienced has been characterized by invention in some way. And what we don't realize as lawyers is that for every innovation there are more problems created, and these problems should always be looked at as opportunities. The ability to explore digital technology, such as artificial intelligence, has also opened doors that were not there just a few decades ago, which is a great advancement.

We may only be able to incorporate business-related principles into our trade if we start to view the legal profession as a line of products. One of the principles I'm hoping lawyers would adopt is the Ansoff grid, also known as the Ansoff matrix. In short, this is a tool that management teams use to draft various growth strategies.

In essence, this means that in cases where the conventional routes don't seem viable, you have the chance to assess your skills using business strategies. To start, think about the legal profession and your target market. Consider the people you want to reach out to and the products you are providing

to them. When you consider your career trajectory as a business, it becomes clear that if you are providing mergers and acquisitions to businesses and, perhaps, during a recession, you realize that businesses are not the best target market, you can diversify by considering entering the Nigerian election petition market, which is currently viable, or by looking into emerging fields of data protection and contracts and providing the necessary expertise to e-commerce businesses.

If you still want a shift, diversification may also involve looking into non-lawyer careers in the legal sector. The ones I encounter most frequently are support positions in law firms, including those in human resources, education and training, public relations, marketing, and business development. The list is endless.

I've tried to collect a few of these lists to see if they may perhaps inspire someone else who wants to walk the same path as some of these long young lawyers in recent times, it seems like there are very significant areas where many young lawyers are truly making the wave.

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION**

In the beginning, legal practice used to be limited to courtroom practice but now, due to the impact of civilization, technology and a number of other factors, the frontiers of the legal profession have expanded worldwide. In any area where there is innovation, there will always be a need for compliance with the law.

As long as human relationships and social/business interactions exist, the legal profession will continue to thrive and evolve with emerging trends to accommodate present realities. Career options in the legal profession now include and are not limited to the following: Dispute Resolution, Corporate/Commercial Practice, Banking and Debt Finance Law, Charity Law, Commercial law, Construction law, Consumer law, space law, Fintech and Intellectual Property law, Employment law, Environmental law, Family law, Human Rights Law, Immigration Law, Insurance Law, Entertainment Law, Property law, Shipping law, Tax Law; Competition Law, the list is inexhaustible.

## **DISPUTE RESOLUTION PRACTICE**

This needs no further explanation. It is what many think the law is all about. Dispute Resolution practice involves advocacy before courts and arbitral tribunals on behalf of clients. It is the means by which a lawyer puts his client's case before the court. This aspect of law as we all know is very broad. It involves undertaking different type of disputes in diverse areas of Human endeavors.

## **TECHNOLOGY LAW**

More advanced societies have absorbed the use of technology in the work with law firms and even to provide quicker access to advisory for their clients, so even the tech business benefits from the attorneys who have taken the time to acquire other skills like User interface (UI) and User experience (UX) design. Knowledge of app design is a good route to go for lawyers who are not accustomed to the demands of a law firm and the massive documents we must analyze daily as well as those who want to feast on the meat of the digital wave.

Legal expertise is crucial for designing case management systems, remote desktop, and visual files. Understanding how to create user interfaces, decipher mathematical codes, and understanding the step-by-step processes involved in case filings, witness questionnaires, and counsel bookings.

In addition to the conventional talents taught in law schools and handed down through the years, their skill sets will include a sizable understanding of technology, resource management, and process management.

There are several career paths that lawyers can take in technology depending on their interests and goals. Some practice areas that require lawyers with experience and interest in these areas include financial technology, financial services regulation, data privacy, consumer protection and payments law, experience with the consumer protection Financial Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission, Health-care regulation and compliance, or health information generally, privacy ethics and cybersecurity, e-commerce, licensing and technology transfer.

This is a growing aspect of law, and it is not surprising that many young lawyers are venturing into this field as it has a lot of growth potential. Tech law (as it is fondly called) by itself is a wide area of practice. It encompasses everything from privacy and data protection to intellectual property, financial technology,<sup>1</sup> etc.

The catch for young lawyers in tech is enormous because it is a developing area in Nigeria, and if there is going to be a perfect time for young lawyers to position themselves to make use of the lucrative aspect of legal practice, the perfect time is now. Nigeria is still awaiting its first Act on Data Protection. The applicable law to this area of practice is The Nigerian Data Protection Regulation of 2019. This shows us that the area is actually fresh and in need of more professionals.

## **TRANSACTION ATTORNEYS**

Thankfully in Nigeria, once you are called to the Nigerian Bar, it also means that you can practice as an Advocate and a Solicitor as well.

A transaction lawyer mostly does solicitor's work. They major in advisory services and non-contentious legal work for corporate and individual clients alike, translating client's issues into legal terms, researching cases, writing legal documents, general preparing of cases, liaising with other legal professionals<sup>2</sup>.

## **IN- HOUSE COUNSEL**

An in-house counsel is a type of lawyer hired as a salaried & usually full-time internal employee of a company, organization, agency or corporation for the purpose of performing a set of defined legal functions/services.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The lawyer of the future; Building a career in Technology law and innovation for Young Lawyers by Barr Emmanuel Ido.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.law.ac.uk/employability/career-finder/solicitor#:~:text=A%20solicitor%20day%2Dto%2Dday,liaising%20with%20other%20legal%20professionals.> Last accessed on the 25th of April 2023

<sup>3</sup><https://www.tekedia.com/in-house-legal-counsel-in-nigeria-all-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=An%20in%2Dhouse%20counsel%20is,of%20defined%20legal%20functions%2Fservices.> Last accessed on the 25th of April 2023

## **THE ACADEMIA**

Another area that a lawyer can specialize in is the area of lecturing. The teaching profession has always been with us. And as far as we have lawyers, the profession of law lecturing will never cease to exist.

The position of a law lecturer has even been made more alluring by the decision of the court of Appeal in Plateau State University vs. Joseph & Ors<sup>4</sup> where it was held that it is only a law lecturer who is a civil servant that is barred from engaging in private legal practice and a law lecturer whose employment is with a Federal educational institution, which is rather employment in the 'public service of the Federation' is permitted to engage in legal practice. This erases in the ambiguity raised by Section 2(b) of Part 1 of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria<sup>5</sup>.

## **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

A lawyer can engage in alternative dispute resolution Practice as a career path within the Legal Profession. There are several mechanisms in alternative dispute resolution like Negotiation, Arbitration, Conciliation, Mediation, etc. There is an understanding by many, especially those in the field of commerce that Litigation as a means of dispute resolution is long, antagonistic, expensive, and too technical at times for the attainment of justice.

## **THE BENCH**

This covers the activities of Justices, Judges, Magistrates, Chairmen of Tribunals and Khadis. It is the legal process by which an arbiter or judge reviews evidence and argumentation, including legal reasoning set forth by opposing parties or litigants, to come to a decision which determines rights and obligations between the parties involved<sup>6</sup>.

With the presence of different courts in different divisions and different cadres across the country, there is always a need for appointment of justices or judges, creation of new courts, promotion and retirement of old justices.

## **LAW JOURNALISM**

This involves Law Editors, Writing of Columns, Law Correspondents, etc in the Print, Broadcasting, News Media, and Publishing Houses. Writing has always been a proper skill and a career path all by itself. With the growth of the news media and technological innovations, one can establish legal writing as a career path.

Legal writing involves the analysis of fact patterns and presentation of arguments in documents such as legal memoranda and briefs. One form of legal writing involves drafting a balanced analysis of a legal problem or issue.

<sup>4</sup>(2018) LPELR-46049(CA)

<sup>5</sup>Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as amended

<sup>6</sup><https://ee.wikipedia.org/wiki/adjudication#:~:text=Adjudicating%20is%20the%20legal%20process;obligations%20between%20the%20parties%20involved.>

Last accessed on the 25th of April 2023

## **CONSULTANCY**

Legal consultants advise businesses and organizations on legal matters and provide legal training to their employees. Policy advisors work with government agencies and non-profit organizations to develop legal policies and strategies that address social issues and challenges. At the heart of a lawyer's job is risk, to the client who is generally short-sighted, lawyers act as prophets who can accurately by mere application of general principles of law and its exceptions predict the risks and resultant effects, identify and prescribing solutions. In a normal legal environment this may be preemptively addressing issues such as trademark registrations, shareholders' agreements, or terms of business. Now consultancy can be in different phases with new job descriptions like risk manager and policy analyst, legal project manager tax consultancy and compliance officers.

## **ETHICAL OFFICERS**

Companies are clamoring for people whose main job is to ensure that these companies do not get into the bad light of unethical behavior. As seen in the case of the Heineken bar ladies, the news of Primark, Zara, and other fast fashion brands with the sweat shops in third world countries. This is because developed societies are becoming more aware of the importance of ethical stance of the companies they are dealing with, even when it comes to daily purchases.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF PUPILAGE**

All these areas of practice afford one an opportunity to grow, excel and earn a living. However, I will be quick to emphasize the importance of pupillage in the growth process of a young lawyer, regardless of any field one chooses. In England, Wales and some other Common law jurisdictions, pupillage is the final vocational stage of training for those wishing to become practicing barristers. Pupillage is similar to an apprenticeship. It is the period during which bar graduates build on what they have learnt during the Bar Professional Training Course or equivalent by combining it with practical work experience in a set of barristers' chambers or pupillage training organization.

In the early days or years of law practice, a young lawyer would be trying out several things for the very first time. He or she may not possess the necessary skillset, decorum, analytical and critical thinking ability that is required yet. This is why a period of learning under an experienced master is very important. Pupillage is actual submission to training for a number of years, this allows any young lawyer the opportunity to learn firsthand from 'a master' of his choice before specializing in any area of law. During pupillage, a lawyer's reasoning skills are properly groomed for critical thinking, which is necessary for developing strategies to provide solutions in any aspect of law.

## **AVOIDING EARLY SPECIALIZATION**

Specialization is crucial in today's world for every successful lawyer. With the level of competition in the legal profession one cannot be a Jack of all trade and master of none. However, it is important for every lawyer who strives to the top to ensure that they acquire the basic skills in the diverse areas of law before attempting to specialize in a particular area where he or she intends to carve a niche for ones self.

## **RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR. LEGAL PRACTITIONERS**

I consider it important to emphasize the importance of our Rules of Professional Conduct which guides us in our noble profession. In whatever area of legal practice, you choose, make it a duty to always take into consideration the Rules and abide by them. Good work ethics combined with hard work guarantees success; vehemently refuse to engage in any practice that encourages dishonesty or sharp practices. Young lawyer should avoid the quest to get rich quick by unscrupulous means, this might completely tarnish your image and bring you to complete disrepute which you may never recover from.

## **HOW CAN LAWYERS GET INTO THE NEW PATHWAYS**

What is the first step firms take when they wish to introduce new items or combine into new markets? This idea persists that our profession is similar to a business or a product that we are selling. They always start by conducting preliminary research, which could involve sending out anonymous surveys to the public or asking potential clients what they want in a specific product. Research, in my opinion, would be the first step in introducing this idea into our line of work. What interests you? ask important questions. What do you expect your future to be like? Which weaknesses do you have? What are your strongest points? What are your objectives? What direction do you see yourself taking?

How do you plan to travel there? You should also use this time to make a personal inventory of your values, talents, and interests as they relate to the type of employment you like. Go back to successful times in your life and consider what you were doing at the time, whether it was a job, volunteer work, an internship, or something else entirely. Find out which abilities led to your success and how you might use them in a variety of positions you might be interested in.

This is a very important step that many people skip, so when people graduate from the Nigerian law school, the first thing they do is get a list of 50 A-class law firms in Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt or any of the big cities and send out applications. If they're lucky, one of these law firms will hire them, and their employer essentially shapes the course of their career.

They would have been more focused and more strategic if they had taken a different course of action and asked themselves these important questions. People claim that the reason they aren't progressing is because they are unsure of where to begin and how to map out the plan. I would also liken this to someone who gets out of bed, decides to leave their house, and travels to a specific location. Now let's assume that the location to which they are travelling is perhaps somewhere in Abuja.

Not the process, but only the destination is certain. You have no idea how you're going to get there or whether you'll take a car or a bus. There is no single strategy or powerful map. I had a few friends who I attended school with for their master's programme; we were doing this master's programme because it seemed to be the next logical step, but years later, they are in different fields, not applying the knowledge from the master's programme. I have never met anyone who knew from the beginning when they were going.

The next step is what I would call rebranding if you want to start a new career in the same industry or outside of it. The Nigerian Bar Association recognized the value of rebranding and made sure that continuing legal education was included in the rules of professional conduct. However, you must go further and rebrand yourself to fit into the new environment you intend to enter. If you want to work in technology, take some time off to learn the basics of the field, get to know the key players, and study some of the major deals that have changed the industry recently. It's not just a matter of rebranding your resume to capitalize on incentive opportunities; you should put in a lot more effort to develop as an expert so that when you finally land a job in this field, your expertise will speak for you.

## **HOW DO YOU EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

After completing my master's programme in Queen Mary University of London in 2013, I had the privileging of interning and working with a British law firm before returning to Nigeria to re-join my mentor; Chief Karina Tunyan, SAN. One thing I appreciated about the working environment in England was the emphasis on expertise rather than grades. My knowledge base, or expertise if you will, was primarily developed through shadowing and learning from the people I had to follow.

The fact is, almost always, when you start a new career path, you don't have a lot of knowledge. As a result, you have to be patient and open to learning. You also have to deal with failures because, whether you like it or not, there will be failures. However, you should prioritize the end result and continue to grow. This is a good time to develop both yourself and your portfolio. When I talk about excellence, I don't mean the lengthy eulogies that are currently plastered all over LinkedIn; rather, I think your expertise speaks for you.

## **MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**

I started out as a Trial Attorney in a traditional dispute resolution law firm without salary or any form of monthly remuneration, we essentially earn from what we make in the course of our practice, sometimes that could take 6 months or more without any substantial fee, it was a tough time indeed. Even after returning to Nigeria, it was still difficult for me to settle in because I had spent some time away from home and I did not have the confidence of my co-workers and clients. To gain their trust, I had to demonstrate my excellence in all that I did. Aside from pro bono cases I prosecuted for diverse clients across board, I started with those that were available and worked my way up because I knew it would be difficult to get the cases I wanted. You must work to earn the trust of your network. One thing I observe that many people look out for is reliability, knowing that every assignment is going to be submitted. When given a brief, you should have the stakeholder expectations at the back of your mind.

What I gained from that experience in Karina Tunyan & Company was priceless and what money cannot buy. In 12 years I rose from a 1st Year associate to becoming the Managing Partner of the firm ahead of several Senior Colleagues and eventually took the Silk, simply because of the consistency and resilience that I demonstrated whilst working closely with my Principal Partner. All the reforms I pushed for were largely accepted by my boss who by way belonged to an entirely different generation from mine.

My investiture to the inner bar can be credited largely from the work I did out of the firm, in 10 years of consistent legal Practice I was ready by the books with all my cases completely. What delayed my application before 2022 was finding the right structure and resources. The only reason I exited the firm to establish my own practice was simply because as a traditional dispute resolution law firm, there was no room for equity partnership as required by the Guidelines issued by the Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee (LPPC) which might impair my application towards the rank, but the experience I gained within the 12 years cannot be overemphasized.

We need to understand that the conferment of Rank as a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) is not the cake itself, but simply an icing on the cake. The conferment is simply a validation of your excellence, a sign that your professional has preferred you amongst the numerous qualified lawyers for an outstanding quality of excellence and leadership.

## **CONCLUSION**

Litigation seems to be the mother of law practice. It is the basic understanding of what the layman knows law practice to be. However, there are so many other branches of law. These branches have grown so long that they have entered into every facet of life. Wherever evolution and development has led us into, we see a vacuum that only law can fill. Even with the developments going on in the legal space, there is a need for lawyers to research and groom an acceptable form of practice and dispute resolution mechanisms for peaceful space exploration. I will leave you with these words "There are opportunities everywhere, so are excuses too. Everything you desire to excel in the profession is dressed in an outfit known as hard work."

You should never be afraid to try new things. Aside from having knowledge, skills, and expertise in networks, emotional intelligence is something that is very important. Things may not always go as planned, and the results may not always be as glamorous as you had hoped, but you should be able to pick yourself up, keep moving forward, and eventually arrive at your destination. Embrace failure in all its forms. Use each setback as a learning opportunity. Work to improve yourself from yesterday.

Finally, my charge to you today is to be dedicated and hard working. Some will say work smart and not hard, but the truth is that the two are not mutually exclusive. You need to work smart to come up with great ideas, but need hard work to execute them properly. Hard work is enviable, normalize hard work, accept it as part of your life stop whining about it, be about it. Do you honestly believe that climbing up the mountain is going to be easy, do you honestly believe that successful people are just working smart without putting up the hours, the grind has to be ground and the hustle has to be 'hustled'? if you want to play hard, first you must earn it by working hard, work hard but remember to maintain a good life balance and also remember to stay hungry and stay humble.

Thank You.

**Michael Jonathan Numa**, SAN FDP.UK  
Managing Partner, M.J Numa & Partners LLP  
Email: mj.numa@mjnuma.com

## SIGHTS AND SCENES

At the Welcome Coctail during the 8th Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa Jsc (Rtd) Professional Training and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers held on Friday, April 28, 2023 at the J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja



L-R: Linda Shaljaba, Jafiada Madubu and Kelechi Amadi



L-R: Dr. Damilola Adejumo, Olumide Babalola and Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN interacting with the Panelists



L-R: Ado Nimyel Gonji, Prof. Paul Idornigie, SAN and Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN



L-R: Linda Shaljaba, Dr. Damilola Adejumo and Jafiada Madubu



Some of the participants networking



Simon Tabji and Amanda Bantai networking with some participants



L-R: Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama, Linda Shaljaba and Paul Ebiloma

## SIGHTS AND SCENES

8th Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa Jsc (Rtd) Professional Training and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers held on Saturday, April 29, 2023 at the J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja



L-R: Dr. Damilola Adejumo, Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama; Leke Kehinde; Hon. Justice J.T. Tsoho, Chief Judge, Federal High Court; Dr. Reginald Aziza, Olumide Babalola



Hon. Justice John T. Tsoho, Chief Judge of Federal High Court giving the Chairman's remarks



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN giving the opening remarks



Leke Kehinde delivering the Keynote Address on behalf of Michael J. Numa, SAN



Dr. Damilola Adejumo delivering her lecture



Olumide Babalola delivering his lecture



Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama delivering his lecture



A cross-section of the participants

## SIGHTS AND SCENES

8th Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa Jsc (Rtd) Professional Training and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers held on Saturday, April 29, 2023 at the J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja



Mrs Lola Agbaje making a remark



Hon. Justice Gladys K. Olotu making a remark



Dr. Reginald Aziza delivering his lecture



Prof. Paul Idornigie, SAN making a remark



Quadri Adelanwa, one of the participants asking a question during the session



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN presenting a plaque to Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN presenting a plaque to Olumide Babalola



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN presenting certificate of Participation to Gladys Gbenga-Ogunde

## WORDS ON MARBLE

It is my considered view, which I cherishingly uphold, that the judiciary must at all times strive to weather the storm, so to say, and be seen to have risen up to daunting challenges before it; otherwise it will one day wake up from the slumber thereof only to realise that it has lost its prestige, formidable authority and legitimacy. And I dare reiterate that the alternative to a virile, courageous, fearless, incorruptible and visionary judiciary is anarchy.

– **Saulawa, JCA in Gadi V. Male (2010) 7 NWLR (Pt. 1193) 225.**

It is all very well to paint Justice blind, but she does better without a bandage round her eyes. She should be blind indeed to favour and prejudice, but clear to see which way lies the truth; and the less dust there is about, the better.

– **Lord Alfred Denning.**

The courts exist to do substantial justice not formal and technical justice. Rules of Court dealing with the technical modes of procedure should be subservient to the dictates of justice. If therefore the observance of any rule will produce an obvious injustice, a court of justice will naturally prefer justice to the technicalities the rule imposes.

– **Oputa, JSC in Nneji V. Chukwu (1998) 3 NWLR (pt. 81) 184.**

“The order of court in an annulled election has no retrospective effect on the tenure and actions taken by the governor before the nullification order. Therefore both the pre-nullification tenure and acts flowing from it are recognizable by law as the valid legal effect of the annulled election. The period spent in office as governor by the person concerned must count as part of his tenure.”

– **Adekeye, JSC in Brig. Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa V. INEC.**

## PHOTO SPEAK



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN speaking at the Body of Benchers Send Forth Dinner in honour of Chief Wole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN, former Chairman of the Body of Benchers



Chief Wole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN (middle) with Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN (3rd right) and other members of Body of Benchers during the Send Forth Dinner in honour of Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN



R-L: Charles Chiwar, President, Lake Chad Club, Maiduguri with Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN, the elected Chairman, Board of Trustees, Lake Chad Club, Maiduguri, Borno State



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN (middle) with well wishers after being elected as the Chairman, Board of Trustees, Lake Chad Club, Maiduguri, Borno State



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN (middle) during Gombe State Governorship Election Petition Tribuna, sitting in Bauchi State



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN (left) during Gombe State Governorship Election Petition Tribuna, sitting in Bauchi State



Hassan Olalekan Sherif, Esq., speaking at the 2023 NBA Bwari Law Week, representing Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN



Hassan Olalekan Sherif, Esq. (3rd right) with other members of the NBA Bwari Branch during the 2023 NBA Bwari Law Week

# LEGAL

# HUMOUR

George and Harry set out in a trans-Atlantic hot air balloon race. After 37 hours in the air and appearing lost, George offers, "We had better lose some altitude Harry so we can see exactly where we are." Hesitantly, Harry lets some hot air out of the balloon, and it begins to slowly descend below the cloud cover. Still confused as to their exact location, George again offers, "I still can't tell where we are Harry, let's ask that gentleman down there on the ground." Harry yells down to the stranger, "Hey, Mister can you tell us where we are?" "You're in a balloon about 100 feet up in the air," came the reply. "That man must be a lawyer," George quipped. "How can you tell?" said Harry. "Because the advice he just gave us is 100% accurate and totally useless!"

An attorney, addressing the jury and speaking of his client who recently killed his parents: "Dear ladies and gentlemen, please take mercy and release this poor orphan."

Two well-dressed lawyers went to an expensive restaurant, ordered two cups of coffee and then took out sandwiches from their briefcases to eat. The Waitress confronted them and said: Sorry Sir, but you can't eat your own food here, it is against the rules. The lawyers quietly looked at each other, they exchanged their sandwiches & continued their meals!

culled from [www.re-quest.net/g2g/humour/lawyer-jokes/index.htm](http://www.re-quest.net/g2g/humour/lawyer-jokes/index.htm)

## PHOTO SPEAK



Samuel Fagade, General Manager, Janada International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation speaking to students of Funtaj International School during their One-Week Orientation Programme at the firm



Linda Shaljaba (1st row right), Samuel Fagade (3rd row middle) and Precious Onyema (1st row left) with students of Funtaj International School during their One-Week Orientation Programme at the firm



L-R: Francis Oronsaye, Rashidat Obamajure, Jerry Musa, Sarah Atumga, Mark Chidi Agbo, Hajara Sorondinki, Darlington Onyekwere and Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama during a courtesy visit to Jerry Musa's Residence



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN (middle) at the 70th Birthday Anniversary celebration of Prof. Awa Kalu



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN Speaking at the International Night of Tributes on behalf of the Body of Senior Advocate of Nigeria (BOSAN) for RTN. Jonathan B. Majiyagbe, SAN



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN with some of the 2023 Law School Externs posted to the Abuja Office during the International Night of Tributes for RTN. Jonathan B. Majiyagbe, SAN



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN (3rd left) with colleagues at the Nasarawa State Governorship Election Petition Tribuna, Lafia, Nasarawa State



Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN at the Nasarawa State Governorship Election Petition Tribuna, Lafia, Nasarawa State



## NEWS FROM THE FIRM

The Firm held its 8th edition of the Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa, JSC, (Rtd) Professional Training and Mentoring Programme for Young Lawyers on Saturday, April 29, 2023, themed “Career Options in the Legal Profession: Breaking into Different Pathways as a Young Lawyer” which held at the J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja.

The entire management and staff of J-K Gadzama LLP congratulate our Founding Principal Partner, Joe-Kyari Gadzama, SAN, who was elected as Chairman Board of Trustees, Lake Chad Club, Maiduguri, Borno State.

The Firm welcomed the Externs from the 2022/23 Academic Session of the Nigerian Law School for their externship.

The Firm welcomed students of Funtaj International School on May 29, 2023 for a One-Week Orientation Program.

Ms. Sarah Jeta Atumga, Associate of the Firm, will be attending the 13th Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) Annual Conference coming up on 5th - 8th July, 2023, at the Avani Victoria Falls Resort, Livingstone Zambia.

## PHOTO SPEAK



Rashidat Obamajure speaking to the Externs from the Nigerian Law School at the Hon. Justice M. L. Uwais Library



Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama welcomes Externs from the Nigerian Law School to the firm for their Externship



Rashidat Obamajure (2nd left) Mark Chidi Agbo (3rd left) and Linda Shaljaba (4th right) with students from Baze University during their study tour



Mark Chidi Agbo (3rd right), Linda Shaljaba (left) and Simon Tabji (middle) with students from Ahmadu Bello University during their study tour



Lamar Joe-Kyari Gadzama with the Managing Director, Okitipupa PLC, Taiwo Abimbola Adewole at the Stratton Hotel, Asokoro



Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama, Oluniyi Adediji and Olasubomi Adegbemisoye with the 2023 Lagos Law School Externs posted to the Lagos Office



L-R: Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama and Dr. Monday Ubani at the Nigerian Bar Association Section on Public Interest and Development Law (NBA-SPIDEL) 2023 conference



L-R: Oluniyi Adediji and Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama at the Nigerian Bar Association Section on Public Interest and Development Law (NBA-SPIDEL) 2023 conference

# UPCOMING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Mock Trial Exercise for the 2023 Set of Externs from the Nigerian Law School, Friday, 21st July, 2023, Hon. Justice Niki Tobi, CON (RTD) Moot Court, J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja.

Nigerian Law Society (NLS) Maiden Annual General Conference, Friday, 28th July, 2023.

African Bar Association (AFBA) 2023 Annual Conference, Saturday, 6th August - Thursday, 10th August, 2023, University of South African (UNISA), Pretoria, South Africa.

Nigerian Bar Association Annual General Conference (NBA-AGC), Friday, 25th August - Friday, 1st September, 2023, Abuja, Nigeria.

Colloquium in honour of Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, OFR, MFR, SAN on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his conferment with the Rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Friday, 1st September, 2023, S.M.A Belgore Hall, J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja, Nigeria.

4th African Arbitration Association (AfAA) Annual Conference, Thursday, 12th October, 2023 – Saturday, 14th October, 2023, Cape Town, South Africa.

16th J-K Gadzama LLP Public Annual Lecture, November, 2023, Abuja, Nigeria.

4th African Arbitration Association Annual International Arbitration Conference, Thursday, 12th October - Saturday, 14th October, 2023, Cape Town, South Africa.

International Bar Association (IBA) Annual Conference, Sunday, 29th October - Friday, 3rd November, 2023, Paris, France.

# OUR PEOPLE

## PARTNERS

1. **Joe-Kyari Gadzama**, OFR, MFR, SAN, FNIALS, FICMC, DipICArb, FNICArb, FCIArb, C.Arb.  
Founding Principal Partner
2. **Prof. Tahir Mamman**, OON, SAN  
Senior Consulting Partner
3. **Mohammed Monguno**, ACIArb  
Senior Partner
4. **Francis O. Oronsaye**, MCIArb., AICMC  
Partner
5. **Geraldine Mbah**  
Partner
6. **Darlington Onyekwere**, ACIArb  
Partner
7. **Madu Joe-Kyari Gadzama**, LL.M (Warwick), MCIArb., MICMC  
Partner
8. **Jerry Ombugadu Musa**, LL.M, CDRS  
Junior Partner
9. **Oluniyi Adediji**, ACTI, ABR  
Junior Partner
10. **Agbo Mark Chidi**, MCIArb.  
Junior Partner

## SENIOR ASSOCIATES

1. John Echezona Unachukwu
2. Rashidat Banke Obamojuro
3. Lamar Joe-Kyari Gadzama, ACIArb., AICMC

## VISITING ASSOCIATE

Ignatius Ozoilo, Pg. Dip., LL.M

## ASSOCIATES

1. Sarah Jeta Atumga
2. Adegbemisoye A. Olasubomi, ACIArb, ABR
3. Hassan Olalekan Sherif
4. Georginia Daniel Enoch
5. Onyekachi Agbonma Eluwa
6. Khadijah Muhammad Abubakar
7. Hajara M. S. Sorondinki

## JUNIOR ASSOCIATES

1. Melissa Ifunanya Okeke
2. Precious Ivuoma Onyema
3. Amanda Naphtali Bantai
4. Gladys Gbenga-Ogundele
5. Japari Kantoma Pur
6. Victor Adetunji Oni
7. Boluwatife Majek-Owoo
8. Kelechi Joshua Amadi
9. Jafiada Dauda Madubu
10. Simon Tabji Baltai

## PRACTICE MANAGER

Linda Havi Shaljaba

## OFFICE MANAGER

Sunday Ali Dzarma

## ACCOUNTANT

Fidelis Edache

## LIBRARIAN

John A. Nwafor

BLIS, MLIS, AESM, ITIL, LRCN (Certified)

## ICT PERSONNEL

Olalekan R. Olasehinde

CNSS (UK), CCNA

## JURIS CONSULT

Hon. Justice Alfa Modibbo Belgore, CJN (RTD), GCON

(Former Chief Justice of Nigeria)

Hon. Justice George A. Oguntade, J.S.C (RTD), CON.

## SENIOR CONSULTANT

Prof. Paul Idornigie, SAN, PhD, FCIS, FCIArb, C.Arb

# JICAM

JANADA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ARBITRATION & MEDIATION



Janada International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation (JICAM) was established in 2015. It is a dispute resolution centre in Abuja, designed to promote a suitable forum for the resolution of domestic and international disputes. It is fully equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. The rules and guidelines for JICAM accommodate both *ad hoc* and institutional arbitration.

## OUR SERVICES

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(360 Systems' New Instant Replay2, Networked Digital Audio, 1000 Audio Cuts at your fingertips, Instant Sound Effect, Instant Music)

## CONTACT US

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info@jicam.org

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## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a neutral venue for the resolution of both Domestic and International disputes; and encourage the settlement of disputes from Corporate, Domestic, International Trade, Investment and other Transactions.

## VISION

To become the world's leading client-centric independent and efficient Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre.

## OUR FACILITIES

1. Hearing Rooms
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4. Claimants'/Respondents' Meeting Rooms
5. Waiting Room/Lounge
6. Food Court (The Dome)
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12. Shelving units
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## CONTACT US:

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ulidilimultimedialtd



## VOX POPULI FOUNDATION

### Who are we?

The Vox Populi Foundation for Leadership was founded in the year 2010 and was incorporated in the year 2012 by its founder Chief J-K Gadzama OFR, MFR, SAN, FNIALS, FCI Arb. (UK) (of Lincolns Inn, Barrister/Life Bencher/CEDR Accredited Mediator). The Foundation is a Non-Profit making institution formed to deepen the understanding of democracy by carrying out structured programmes that promote positive leadership qualities and ideals in the society. This is because we believe that a society can only evolve when the people have the opportunity to contribute to the process of governance and have a voice in the creation of policies and laws that affect them as a people.

### How do we do this?

We sincerely believe the best way to achieve this goal is to pursue initiatives that look at proffering solutions to the issues that interfere with governance. We look at utilizing the immense manpower of youths and able bodied people who are hungry to bring about a change in their society through direct engagement with society in a volunteer signup process, which is one of the mechanisms we intend to employ to secure citizens participation. This process of inclusion we believe will foster and build a common front that will enable people to improve on their understanding of what leadership connotes in their everyday lives and reinforce their commitment towards creating a better society.

### Governance

Created with gifts by its founder Chief J-K Gadzama, the foundation is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization, with its own Board. The trustees of the foundation set policies and delegate authority to the Director General and senior staff for the foundation's operations. Zonal volunteer Heads in the 6 geo-political zones explore opportunities to pursue the foundation's goals and formulate strategies for action.

### Location

The Foundation is headquartered in Abuja. It conducts its activities through an increasing pool of volunteers from across the country.



## VOX POPULI FOUNDATION

**ADDRESS:** 1st Floor, Plot 1805, Damaturu Crescent  
by Kobo Way, Off Ahmadu Bello Way, Adjacent to Garki International  
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Telephone: +234 (0) 815 656 5619

### *Our Vision*

*to promote, protect and safeguard the tenets and ideals of democracy leadership & good governance in our society.*

### *What is Our Goal?!*

*to encourage citizens to participate in governance & support a platform that will inspire proactive leadership that will drive the free flow of democratic ideals and social justice.*

Sign-up to Join and receive our e-mail Newsletter and Special Notifications  
Your information will be kept confidential and used solely for our communications

#### Required Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ @

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon completing the information sheet, you can detach and send to our address above or you can email us on

[info@voxpathulifoundation.org](mailto:info@voxpathulifoundation.org)

for further enquiries, call us on

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This publication among many other articles and news from the firm are accessible online on the office website.

    J-K GADZAMA LLP

**DISCLAIMER:** The information contained in this Newsletter is not legal advice. Please consult a lawyer for legal assistance

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