

Chief Olufemi Majekodunmi – A great Mentor and Role Model

It is with sadness that I mourn the passing of Chief Olufemi Majekodunmi, a man whose life and work left an indelible mark on architecture in Nigeria and beyond. He had more than enough to teach about professionalism whenever you were around him. I was delighted he took a natural liking to me and would always engage in some intellectual conversation or the other, however short. He would regularly reference his brief time working at Arup Associates in London.

Apart from collaborating together with his firm on some projects, I had the privilege of working closely with him for several years on the Corona Schools Trust Council Projects Committee, which he chaired and where his wisdom, vision, and unwavering commitment to excellence guided every decision we made. Chief Majekodunmi was not only a brilliant architect but a great mentor and role model - certainly he was to me personally. His ability to balance creativity with practicality, and his insistence on integrity in all things, inspired me and countless others.

A few years ago, at his request, we drove together to and from Abeokuta to inspect the historic Lion building of the Moses Adekoyejo Majekodunmi Foundation, which was to be repaired and restored to its former glory and will eventually serve as a famous museum. Our discussions for every minute of the journey cut across all aspects of the built environment right up till we returned to Lagos. We didn't solve all the world's problems, but I felt we got fairly close!

This and other experiences revealed his gift for fostering collaboration across disciplines and cultures, always with the goal of creating spaces that uplift communities and stand the test of time.

Only a few weeks ago, he called and asked me to please investigate and offer some help to a neighbour whose property was being affected by adjoining construction works. He exhibited such compassion, and asked that if there were to be any associated costs, the bill should be sent to him to bear. Kind-hearted and generous to the core, and to the end.

Chief Majekodunmi's legacy is not only in the buildings he designed, but in the people he mentored, the institutions he strengthened, and the values he embodied. His passing is a profound loss, but his influence will continue to shape generations of architects, engineers, and other professionals.

We will surely miss him, May his great, yet gentle, soul rest in perfect peace, and may we honor his memory by carrying forward the enviable standards of excellence and humanity he lived by.

Engr Kunle Adebajo

President Association for Consulting Engineering in Nigeria (ACEN)