

**Chief (Dr.) Chris Bassey Effiong, P.E.; K of C**  
(Ada Idaha Ke Efik Eburutu)  
National President EfikUSA



**FOUR YEARS OF STEWARDSHIP**

The Chairperson, members of the High Table, our visitors from abroad, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Efik National Association USA (EfikUSA) Inc., I welcome you to our 21<sup>th</sup> National Convention in the beautiful city of Houston, Texas.

I thank all members of the Convention Planning Committee (CPC), officers of EfikUSA, Advisory Board of Trustees (ABOT), the Youth Wing, chapter presidents and members for their support of the activities of the 21<sup>st</sup> National Convention.

The annual convention is the special occasion where we come together to fundraise in support of the humanitarian projects undertaken by EfikUSA, and especially for the college scholarship awards given to deserving college students in the community.

The gathering of Efik descendants in different parts of the United States of America started in the late 1980s but gathered momentum in the 1990s which resulted in the formation of a unified body of all the respective Efik associations. The formation of a unified body was consolidated here in Houston on February 2, 1997. And today, we are gathered for our 21<sup>st</sup> year celebration!

Four years ago, I assumed the stewardship role of the Efik National Association USA, Inc, (EfikUSA). It ranks among the most rewarding years of my life of service. This period also had its challenges. By title, I am the president of EfikUSA, but I see the position as that of stewardship. A position that gives me the opportunity to build, shape, protect, and maintain the culture of a people - the Efik people. I take the responsibilities of the position very seriously and strive to do my best at all times and have learned that no matter how much one tries to achieve perfection there is always room for improvement.

With a dynamic Executive Committee and an insightful Advisory Board of Trustees (ABOT) working with me over the years, we have been able to move the association forward while we stay true to the mission and vision of EfikUSA. A summary of our accomplishments over the years of our stewardship is given here:

- ❖ Successfully performed 2015 Medical Mission to Cross River State, Nigeria.
- ❖ Awarded yearly College scholarships to deserving undergraduate students in the community.
- ❖ Organized private donations for members of the Efik community at large affected by the hurricanes of 2017 in Houston Texas and other parts of the country.
- ❖ Made \$1,000.00 donation to the American Red Cross for victims of the 2017 hurricanes in Texas and Florida.
- ❖ Participated in Utomo Obong Efik for the first time in 2014 with great outing and donation.

- ❖ EfikUSA centrally participated in the ceremonial Catholic Ordination / 1<sup>st</sup> Mass celebration of one of their illustrious sons, Rev Fr. Peter Nsa Bassey in Buffalo, New York, on June 02 – 03, 2018.
- ❖ Maintained our corporate business model – a viable organization - rooted in integrity and accountability.
- ❖ Formally incorporated (through our Bylaws) the Youth Wing as an integral part of EfikUSA and appointed a Youth Wing Director to guide and streamline the activities of the Youth Wing.
- ❖ Instituted planned rotation of Annual Convention venue. This gives the hosting chapter at least two years to plan for the convention.
- ❖ Incorporated our “doing business as” (dba) EfikUSA
- ❖ Welcomed two new points of light – EfikUSA chapters – the Efik Professionals of Houston (2015) and the Great Lakes Efik Association (GLEA) in 2017.

There is no doubt about it, we all want to see an Efik organization capable of numerous things for the benefit of humanity and the Efik community. “The harvest is plenty but the labor is short”. There are lots of opportunities for every one of us to contribute to the growth of EfikUSA. A quick look around the hall today shows well-dressed people in our quintessential Efik attires (usobo and onyo-onyo) with great pride in our culture. Service gives life to culture. Please consider serving.

With the joy in your hearts and the desire to do good for humanity, I call upon you now, to join your brothers and sisters to build an association you will always be proud of. The association is alive and strong and fulfilling the purpose for which it was created. Ebet nso?

Thanks to the host chapter – Efik Professionals of Houston - that packaged the convention with a holistic concept for the benefit of our guests and members. You are here today to enjoy a great event organized by the host chapter and funded by EfikUSA which translates to the following:

1. **Participation in fundraising** money for our charitable programs and initiatives.
2. **Opportunity to Meet** potential business partners and gain new perspectives
3. **Satisfaction of yearlong yearning for** Efik cultural entertainment – dancing and the masquerades (Christmas in July!)
4. **Opportunity to rekindle** old friendships and make new ones, secure lifetime partners
5. **Being part of the solution to stem Breast Cancer**

The Efik Professional of Houston, The City of Houston, our host City and Texas welcomes you. EfikUSA welcomes you. Relax and enjoy the evening full of rich Efik cultural heritage.

Thank you for your support and May God Almighty bless you.

*Chris B&E*

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