



BONNY ISLAND FOUNDATION
USA & CANADA

Unity And Service

Aru bile bilem kuma mbapa bile bileghaa



HISTORY OF BIF

I will like to start by expressing my gratitude to God for making this day a reality as we gather together to celebrate our 21st anniversary as an organization. Glory be to God Almighty for helping the BIF meet and surpass, the odds notwithstanding, the goals we set for ourselves at the inception of this organization. On the 4th of July 2003, I convened a meeting of some very energetic and patriotic Bonny indigenes at the residence of Mr. Nengi Halliday in North Brunswick, New Jersey. The gathering was to fashion out solutions to the numerous problems that beset us as a people both at home and abroad. I chose that location for logistic and strategic reasons. Those present at that meeting were Nengi Halliday, Leslie Green, Dima Brown, Late Ted Allison, Maxwell Brown, Atedo Banigo, Gogo Brown, Chris Jumbo, Steve Benstowe, Norman Halliday and Adango Miadonye. At the end of the meeting, we resolved to form an umbrella organization for Bonny people in North America.

We had simple dreams. We resolved to live by choice and not by chance, to make changes and not excuses, to be useful and not be used. We were courageous enough not to follow where ever the path may lead, but instead to go where no path exists and leave a trail. We were on the right track as evidenced by our accomplishments.

The BIF was formed to be a catalyst for change, to promote education, Ibani culture and heritage, to foster unity and progress among Bonny people. I feel excited to say that BIF has lived up to its billing. With the wind on our back and God with us, we have achieved a few notable things which are, but not limited to:

1. Formation of the BIF on 4th July 2003 and its registration on 4th of February 2004, as the first and only registered Bonny organization in North America.
2. Organization of annual conventions, at which we form new friendships and cement old bonds.
3. Medical outreach to Bonny, during which lectures on topics of public health importance were delivered. A health clinic with distribution of free medical supplies to the indigent.
4. Donation of an ECG (Electrocardiogram) machine to the Bonny General Hospital for the diagnosis of Cardiac conditions.

5. Donation and distribution of protective face masks to all the Major Houses in Bonny, during the COVID -19 Pandemic.

6. Update of our Lord's Prayer in Ibani to encourage usage of Ibani language.

7. Formation of the first Bonny cultural groups (Owu ogbo and Eremina Ogbo) in North America.

8. Advocacy and campaigns towards the completion of the Bonny- Bodo Road.

9. Advocacy and campaigns towards the rebuilding of the Bonny landing jetty in Port Harcourt.

10. Award of Bursary/Scholarships to deserving Bonny students.

11. Recognition and presentation of lifetime achievement awards to notable Bonny citizens in the fields of History, Medicine, Law, Community advocacy, etc.

12. Launching of the Bonny Light House, an interactive internet forum for Bonny indigenes at home and abroad.

13. Interfacing with the Rivers State Government on issues of importance to Ibani people.

14. The erection of a new 17-foot-tall monument over the old one of Nigeria's first professional photographer, Late Jonathan Adagogo Green at the Bonny Cemetery.

15. The distribution of food packages (rice, geisha, and other condiments) to over 400 widows and the elderly, in the Bonny community, through BIF's outreach program.

It is evident from the forgoing that the BIF has and continues to play its role as the foremost community-based organization among the Ibani at home and abroad. The BIF in the years ahead, God willing, will continue to strive for the development and advancement of our homeland Bonny.

Leslie Minaibim. Green, MD.
Chairman, BIF Board of Trustees.