



FUTA NEWS

CESRA HOLDS NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ASTRONOMY FOR TEACHERS

In a bid to enlighten Nigerian School Teachers on how to utilize the study of outer space to foster the understanding of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), the Centre for Space Research and Applications (CESRA) recently organized a National Workshop on Astronomy for Teachers with the theme: Promoting the Teaching of Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) through Astronomy. While delivering a presentation on Astronomy, the Guest Speaker Mr. LeRoy Larry, a Professional trainer and American Astrophysicist actively involved in space exploration missions with the National Aeronautic and space Administration (NASA) in the United States of America (USA), said Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics are tools to create awareness on outer space. He said Philosophers and ancient astronomers over the years propounded explanations on outer space for thousands of years until scientists like Copernicus, Galilee and Newton started using the scientific method to unravel the outer space mysteries.

Highlighting the importance of space to Man, Larry said without space, man would become unconscious within fifteen seconds because there will be no oxygen and the blood and body fluids would boil and freeze as a result of little or no air pressure. Speaking further, Mr. Larry explained that Astronomy engages scientific studies, Mathematical calculations, Engineering and Technology inventions to successfully explore the outer space with the use of ground and space based telescopes, space rockets and others. Summing up, the guest speaker said the quest to learn about our place in the universe has been scientifically explained by astronomy. “As future scientists and engineers you are now positioned to use available astronomical tools to give us more insight about our universe.” He concluded.

Addressing participants at the event, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebisi Daramola, represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, (Development), Professor Tolulope Akinbogun, said that the level of discouraging failure recorded annually in the physical sciences in Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations and the poor performance of Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination candidates is due to a weak background in science. He said that the workshop is aimed at addressing the distressing situation and enable school teachers, to enhance their teaching skills and ability to effectively communicate with the students which will make subjects that have been stereotyped as difficult presented in a way that will make them easy for comprehension.

While delivering the welcome address, Director, Centre for Space Research and Applications (CESRA), Professor Joseph Akinyede said the workshop is the first of its kind in Nigeria and the whole of Africa and that it is designed to promote the teaching of Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) through the introduction of astronomy in a simplified and readily comprehensible form to primary and secondary school teachers in Nigeria. “Deep science knowledge and highly skilled science professionals are key strategic resources of the global space enterprise. To build an African Science workforce that is able to contribute to the emerging vision of international cooperation for space exploration. It is critical to recruit and train Africa’s highest and best Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) students” he said. The Workshop was organized in collaboration with African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology in English (ARCSSTE-E) Organization of Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) and SLOOH Community Observatory, USA. It was well attended by Primary and Secondary School Teachers from all the states in the geographical zones of the Federation including FCT Abuja.