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MTN FOUNDATION PARTNERS ORACLE TO BOOST ICT SKILLS IN

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MTN Foundation, the corporate social investment vehicle of leading ICT company in Nigeria, MTN, has joined Oracle, a company that engineers hardware and software to work together in the cloud and in the data center, to give further ICT training to select MTNF scholars. The collaboration will see two projects come to fruition: a bursary funded by Oracle for one student to attend the CERN openlab Summer School in Switzerland, and plans to train up to 2,000 MTNF scholars in database design and SQL and Java programming skills.

"At MTN, we believe that education is pivotal to the growth of any nation, which is why we are delighted with this collaboration that will see Mufutau Akuruyejo, an MTN Foundation scholar, leave for Switzerland to participate in the nine-week CERN openlab programme. Akuruyejo will be the first Nigerian to participate in this intensive programme, which would not have been possible without Oracle's support," said Akinwale Goodluck, Corporate Service Executive, MTN Nigeria.

CERN openlab is a unique public-private partnership between CERN and leading ICT companies. Its mission is to accelerate the development of cutting-edge solutions to be used by the worldwide LHC (large hadron collider) community.

"Our highly competitive student programme is a cornerstone of CERN openlab, with the students bringing new ideas and invigorating our collaboration," says Alberto Di Meglio, Head of CERN openlab. "This year, we received over 1,500 applications from all over the globe and have selected students of the highest possible caliber. We're very excited to be welcoming them to CERN very soon."

The MTNF Science and Technology Scholarship Scheme has provided hundreds of brilliant but indigent students the opportunity to acquire qualitative tertiary education. The programme is expected to encourage Nigerian students to take interest in science and technology-related courses for the ultimate benefit of the country.

The second initiative focuses on teaching database design and SQL and Java programming skills to MTN Foundation Scholars , using Oracle Academy curriculum and hosted on-line learning materials. Students will be taught by two Oracle Academy trained faculty from the Ajayi Crowther University and Aived International who have attended and passed the formal Oracle Academy faculty training courses.

Commenting on the Oracle Academy programme, Goodluck said it would help to further boost the ICT skills in beneficiaries and avail them of valuable opportunities after completing the database design and SQL and Java programming courses.

"With the rapid adoption of technology in Nigeria, it is imperative that students are equipped with the right skills to take advantage of career and entrepreneurial opportunities," said Adebayo Sanni, Country Managing Director, Oracle Nigeria. "We support the country's efforts to undertake a digital transformation to help secure its place as a leader in the global economy. We are delighted to offer Mufutau Akuruyejo the opportunity to attend CERN openlab's unique summer programme for students. When public and private organizations collaborate, we have the opportunity to effect innovative change and create new opportunities," he added.

The MTNF Scholarship Scheme covers tuition, books and pocket allowance. It is renewable provided recipients maintain a minimum of 3.5 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) in their course of study and an overall 2.5 CGPA. In 2012, the scholarship was extended to visually impaired students in public tertiary schools across the country who meet the requirements.

"Corporate social responsibility is at the core of MTN's organizational philosophy and in a few months, the Foundation will be celebrating giant strides it has made in the past decade. We are excited that our mission to improve the quality of life in communities all over the country has yielded great dividends as evidenced by the positive impact our initiatives have had in helping to reduce poverty as well as foster sustainable development in Nigeria," Goodluck added.

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