

It is official! (Posted on Facebook on May 24, 2022)

I will be moving to Florida International University (FIU) to start a new position as Professor of History and African and African Diaspora Studies, in August. Come visit us in Miami!

In the coming months, I will be recruiting my PhD students in History and African and African Diaspora Studies. My mission is to train PhD students, not to be like me, but to be whatever they would like to be. To help them find their own authentic intellectual self. To help them secure their own independent and visible seat in the pantheon of knowledge--respectfully and honorably. To help them focus on the process, not on the outcome. For, if the process is rigorous and conscientious, the outcome would be remarkable, and the feat will be repeatable, sustainable, and transferable.

If it takes an entire community to raise a child in many parts of Africa, it takes more than an individual's effort to be successful in anything. I was lucky to start my teaching career 12 years ago at Western Carolina University where I received the kindness of my colleagues in the History Department. I couldn't have reached the peak of my career, published my books, and start the Fuji book and documentary projects without the collegiality of my colleagues in the History Department and the research money from Western Carolina University. In retrospect, I couldn't have been a better scholar if I started my career at another university. I will miss my colleagues and North Carolina!

The FIU position was one of the only two full professors in African history jobs advertised in North America during the current job hunting season, which started last August. I'm grateful to the five distinguished scholars who wrote letters of recommendation for me: Prof. Gloria Chuku, Prof. Trevor Getz, Prof. Omoniyi Afolabi, Prof. Kristin Mann, and Prof. Judith Byfield. Prof Akin Ogundiran, another distinguished intellectual, said good things about me to FIU. Modupe o, egbon.

In preparing for my job talk titled, "Animal Africana: Nonhuman Creatures and the African Diaspora," on February 2, I forced Itandola, whose room borders my home office, to abruptly wake up in the middle of the night to the voice of a father speaking to himself and learning his lines. Itandayo picked the shirts I wore to campus interview in April, and thought I looked like an alien in suit because I rarely wear one. Olamide kept calling the hotel receptionist to give me a wake-up call, so I don't oversleep and screw things up!

I dedicate this new phase of my career to all my mentees across the world. I encourage you to stay focused and not be discouraged by failure as you pursue your dreams. Success is not the absence of failure, but the audacity not to normalize failure. You won't be defined by what people say or think about you, but by who you are, what you do, and what you truly represent to the humans who matter most in your private and professional lives. Being exceptional WILL NOT give you EVERYTHING you want; however, it will give you enough that you need to flourish. No one with a STRONG faith, working CONSISTENTLY HARD in the RIGHT direction, on the RIGHT things, in the RIGHT place, and with the RIGHT people, has ever failed. Results will vary from individual to individual, location to location, across time, and against the odds posed by time, people, the environment, and circumstances. Las las, we all gonna eat breakfast- a very good one. Ebi ki pa'gun d'oyo ale.

To God be the Glory.

Photo: [Samuel Tofunmi Yusuf](#)

Adire: [Ifeoluwa D. Ojo](#)

Beads: [Omonigbehin Taiwo Olanase](#) and [Omonigbehin Kehinde Ajala](#)/Oje Market, Ibadan

Tailor: Walex Fashion, Abadina/UI. Ibadan. 08037517902