



## AN INTERVIEW WITH EMMANUEL MARK, SR/WA

### **Describe your professional career. How did you first become interested in the right of way industry?**

I am a self-motivated real estate professional with over 18 years of relevant experience, education and related skills. It is important to note that our training in Estate Surveying and Valuation in Nigeria includes the right of way discipline, which is referred to as compulsory acquisition.

I was awarded a contract by the Rivers State Government of Nigeria in 2009 to acquire the right of way for various roads and infrastructure in the state. That was when I first got interested in the right of way industry.





## How did you hear about IRWA? Describe your involvement with the Association so far.

I first heard about the IRWA in 2012, during the Continuing Professional Development Training of Nigeria Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Mr. Ejike E.Okpa, a Dallas-based Nigerian, spoke to us about the right of way profession, encouraging us to be part of IRWA to expand our professional network and build our skill sets.

My involvement with the Association started early 2013 when I filled out the online membership form and later joined the local Chapter 84, Nigeria. I served as Chapter Treasurer in 2015-2016, Secretary in 2016-2017, Vice-President in 2017-2018 and finally, I served as President in 2018-2019.

The highpoint of my tenure as Chapter President was when our Chapter was presented with the Gene L. Land award at IRWA's 2019 Annual Education Conference for highest percentage growth. That was the first time the Chapter was called on stage during the IRWA Conference.

## We would like to congratulate you on being the very first member of Nigeria Chapter 84 to obtain your SR/WA. What does this achievement mean to you?

I am excited to be the first member of Chapter 84 to obtain the SR/WA designation in Nigeria and Africa—a certification which stands for the highest standard of excellence in the right of way profession.



It means a world of impeccable disposition for me. To be the first to be designated SR/WA in my Chapter, in Nigeria and indeed the African continent as a whole is phenomenal and a defining moment for me.

## The Nigerian Chapter of IRWA was inaugurated in 2013 as the first IRWA Chapter in West Africa. How has it grown since then?

Indeed, Chapter 84 was inaugurated in 2013 as the first Chapter in West Africa and has grown in leaps and bounds. Over 20 of our members have achieved their RWA's. Once again, our Chapter growth was evidenced by being recognized as the winner of Gene L. Land award for percentage growth in Portland, Oregon in 2019.

## What do you envision for the future of Chapter 84?

First of all, I think that we have to redefine what the right of way profession means to us. We must work towards enlightening professionals all over Africa about the IRWA and the significance of the profession in the development of infrastructure real estate in Africa.

It is no longer just about creating right of way for highways and utilities; the profession has become more complex. We have become more flexible and adaptable with the changes in our practice. I envision a Chapter that will be more proactive in all aspects of our profession, as various laws and regulations require us to be certified to practice in Nigeria.

## What advice do you have for anyone who is currently working towards their SR/WA?

My advice is simple: continue until you get it! Investment in SR/WA certification and knowledge always pays the best interest.

## What would you like others in the IRWA to know about you or your Chapter?

I am results-oriented, dependable and passionate about my work because I love what I do. I have steady motivation that drives me to do my best and that's why my Chapter will keep winning!

**Member Spotlight** is a wonderful place to introduce yourself or to celebrate a fellow member's contributions to the IRWA. For more information or to submit a member for consideration, please contact Ethel Navales at [navales@irwaonline.org](mailto:navales@irwaonline.org).