



Biography of Mrs. Folorunso Alakija

Mrs. Folorunso Alakija is a businesswoman who has forayed into uncharted territories. She is a philanthropist with a sincere desire to help the needy, a fashion icon with an infallible sense of style, a loving wife, a caring mother, and doting grandmother.

Educated in Europe, she first embarked on a career in office administration, then she went into banking where she remained until she followed her heart and creative calling to establish her own business in the Nigerian fashion industry. Her fashion house “Supreme Stitches” rose to prominence and fame within a few years and rebranded as “Rose of Sharon House of Fashion” which later became a household name. As National President and lifelong Trustee of the Fashion Designers Association of Nigeria (FADAN), she left an indelible mark, promoting Nigerian culture through fashion and style.

Ever the entrepreneur, Mrs. Alakija has set up related businesses: The Rose of Sharon Prints & Promotions which specializes in monogramming, heat/picture transfer and screen printing for promotional and gift items which later metamorphosed into Digital Reality Print Ltd which specializes in highly technical digital large format printing. She oversees the Rose of Sharon Group as the Group Managing Director and she is also the Vice Chairman of FAMFA Oil Limited, her family's oil exploration and production business, seeing to its strategic planning and day to day administration. In addition to these, she is the Vice Chairman of Dayspring Property Development Company Limited, a real estate company with investments in different parts of the world.

With a sincere desire to give to those in need, her philanthropic endeavors, such as the “Rose of Sharon Foundation”, continues to influence her native land positively by empowering widows, their families, as well as orphans, to be successful through educational programs and scholarships to university level. The program which started with 3 widows in 2008 in South-West Nigeria has now spread throughout Nigeria catering for 1000 widows, 1086 widow's children and 250 orphans. In addition to the Foundation, she also does personal philanthropic works to the less privileged.

In her bid empower women from all walks of life, she founded “Flourish Africa”, a platform conceived to create a community of like-minded women, who share their individual experiences and encourage one another to achieve their potentials.

She is an acclaimed public speaker, who pursues her passion with unbridled devotion. Her desire is to inspire the public, most especially the youth and women from all walks of

life by sharing her values and her motto: “whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well” through her motivational talks and speeches.

She has served her country Nigeria, as a member of several committees and she is the first female to be appointed as Chancellor of a public university in Africa. She serves as the Chief Executive Matron of the “African Young Entrepreneurs” (AYE) and is also an Ambassador of “Junior Chambers International” (JCI). She is a member of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council Advisory Board and an Advisory Board member of the Center of African Studies at Harvard University.

She is acclaimed nationally and internationally, in recognition of all her philanthropic work and endeavors and she is also the first female Chancellor of a government-owned university in Africa.

She is a prolific writer and has authored several inspirational books, including her autobiography.