

Staff from DC, Arizona, Honored with NARUC's Barnich Award for International Work

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ORLANDO — In recognition of their efforts to advance effective regulation internationally, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners honored Elijah Abinah of the Arizona Corporation Commission and Dr. Udeozo Ogbue of the District of Columbia Public Service Commission with the 2018 Terry Barnich Award at the Association's 130th Annual Meeting and Education Conference.

The prestigious award recognizes state commissioners and staff who promote international cooperation among utility regulators and the development of professional regulation. The award is named in honor of former Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission (1989 to 1992) Terrence "Terry" Barnich. He was killed on Memorial Day, May 25, 2009, while working as the deputy director of the State Department office overseeing U.S. reconstruction projects in Iraq. The Terry Barnich Award is the highest honor bestowed by NARUC's Committee on International Relations.

"Through their intelligence, commitment to service and enthusiasm to engage with our partner regulators abroad, Elijah and Udeozo epitomize the best that our commissions have to offer," said NARUC Executive Director Greg White. "Their contributions have helped to improve the quality and effectiveness of regulation in the countries we serve and furthered NARUC's reputation as a leader in energy regulation."

About Elijah Abinah

With over 24 years of experience in public utility regulation, Elijah Abinah has provided impactful and lasting support to NARUC's partners abroad. His work ethic, knowledge and willingness to go the extra mile are known to his colleagues in Arizona and to international regulators in Nigeria, Uganda, India, Rwanda and beyond.

In particular, Abinah has provided critical knowledge and assistance to NARUC's long-running partnership with the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission. Through support from the U.S. Agency for International Development and Power Africa, he has engaged with NERC on reliability, cost-reflective tariffs and power purchase agreements, while also training new NERC commissioners on key issues.

Abinah is the Utilities Division Director for the Arizona Corporation Commission. He has served with the ACC for over 15 years, with more than eight years of service to the Oklahoma Corporation Commission prior to that. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from the University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond Oklahoma, and a Master's Degree in Management from Southern Nazarene University in Bethany, Oklahoma.

About Dr. Udeozo Ogbue

Dr. Udeozo Ogbue P.Eng., of the District of Columbia Public Service Commission has served NARUC's international mission for more than 10 years. His contributions have impacted several countries and have helped to shape their utility regulatory development and direction.

Dr. Ogbue has played an important role in NARUC engagements with Tanzania, Nigeria, Pakistan, India, Japan, South Korea and Mexico. Through support from USAID and Power Africa, Dr. Ogbue helped to lead a partnership exchange with Tanzania's Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority on pipeline safety, stressing the fundamentals of pipeline safety and building EWURA's capacity to develop key rules for gas transmission and distribution.

At the District of Columbia Public Service Commission, Dr. Ogbue is the Chief of the Office of Compliance and Enforcement and Program Manager, Pipeline Safety and Damage Prevention. He holds a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering Technology from Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto, a master's degree in Management Sciences (Engineering) from the University of Waterloo, a P. Eng. from Ontario and a Doctor of Business Management from Harlington University, Piccadilly, Manchester, UK. Udeozo is a graduate of the Queen's Executive Program, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

To learn more about the award, visit www.naruc.org/barnichaward.

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NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.