

## Abridged Profile of Senator Lady Uche Ekwunife (Iyom) PhD. CON

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*Senator*  
**UCHE**  
**EKWUNIFE**, (Iyom) PhD. CON  
(Adaugo-Igbo, Anyanwu Nri-Kingdom)

Distinguished Senator Uche Lilian Ekwunife is a celebrated Nigerian politician, an accomplished banker, a visionary leader, and a renowned philanthropist whose career embodies service, resilience, and transformational leadership.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education and Accounting from the University of Calabar. She went on to earn a Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in Business Administration and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. She later obtained a PhD in Public Administration from Atlantic International University (AIU), Hawaii, USA.

Over the course of her career, Senator Ekwunife has consistently demonstrated a commitment to continuous learning and leadership excellence. She has enriched her knowledge through various local and international executive training programs from globally respected institutions, including Harvard Business School, Lagos Business School, the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, as well as the Basic Credit Analysis by IBFCAgustoTraining, among many others.

In addition, she was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate (Doctor of Philosophy, *Honoris Causa*) by the Institute of Journalism, Management and Continuing

Education, Enugu. A Chartered Accountant by profession, she is a respected member of multiple professional bodies, such as the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN), Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM Chartered), Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (HCIB), and is a Fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Marketing (NIMARK).

She has also served on the boards of the Nigerian Film Corporation and the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), further reflecting her capacity for strategic governance and national policy leadership.

Her remarkable service was recognized nationally when she was awarded the prestigious honour of Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON) by President Muhammadu Buhari in May 2023.

Before venturing into politics, Senator Ekwunife distinguished herself in banking with a meteoric rise marked by outstanding leadership. She rose from Branch Manager at the then Standard Trust Bank (later merged with UBA), to Area Manager, and ultimately became Head of the Public Sector Unit at United Bank for Africa (UBA). Her exemplary performance, innovative drive, and ability to lead teams to success earned her the Young Banker of the Year Award in 2001.

Her political journey began in 2007, when she was elected into the Federal House of Representatives to represent the Anaocha/Njikoka/Dunukofia Federal Constituency. She was re-elected in 2011, serving two consecutive terms. Throughout her tenure, she was widely acknowledged for her strong leadership and effective representation. She held key leadership roles, including:

- Chairman, House Committee on Environment (2011–2015) – where she steered major legislative efforts on environmental sustainability.
- Deputy Chairman, House Committee on Public Accounts (2007–2011), ensuring transparency and accountability in public finance.
- Leader, Anambra State Caucus (2011–2015), providing direction and unity among state legislators.
- Leader, APGA Anambra State Caucus (2011–2015) – spearheading political coordination and party strategy.

She was also an active member of several standing committees, such as Public Accounts, Gas Resources, Public Procurement, Rural Development, Women in Parliament, FCT, and Electoral Matters. In addition, she served on ad hoc committees on the Petroleum Industry Bill and House Services.

Her leadership extended to national assignments, where she served as a member of the Presidential Committee on Flood Relief and Rehabilitation (PCFRR) and as the representative of Anambra State on the House of Representatives Constitutional Amendment Committee (2011–2014).

In 2015, following her impactful representation, she was elected into the Nigerian Senate for Anambra Central Senatorial District. Although her tenure was cut short by an unfavorable court judgment in November 2015, she made history as the first woman and first South Easterner to chair the Senate Committee on Petroleum Downstream a groundbreaking leadership role in a male dominated sector. She also contributed significantly to the work of various ad-hoc committees, including Legislative Agenda, Works, Rules and Business, and Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions.

She further showcased her diplomatic leadership by representing the 8th Senate in the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Senator Ekwunife returned to the Senate in 2019, winning a historic landslide victory across all seven local governments of Anambra Central a testament to her people centered leadership. In the 9th Assembly,

she chaired the Senate Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, where her visionary leadership achieved a milestone that had not been reached in 33 years, by securing first-line charge funding from the Federation Account for NASENI (National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure).

She was also an influential voice on other committees, including Finance, Public Procurement, Banking, Insurance and Other Financial Institutions, Police Affairs, and Women Affairs.

Beyond politics, Senator Ekwunife is a transformational leader in philanthropy and community development. Through her Youth and Widows Support Scheme, she has built over 38 houses for underprivileged women and vulnerable groups. Her scholarship and welfare program, established in 2001, has supported more than 10,000 beneficiaries. She has facilitated the employment of over 1,000 youths, attracted federal projects, and championed community development initiatives such as road construction, medical centers, solar street lights, and construction and equipping of schools etc, thereby demonstrating leadership at the grassroots level. She has equally attracted and organized many laudable trainings for women and youths of Anambra State.

She has also been honoured with numerous chieftaincy titles from traditional rulers, recognizing her outstanding leadership and service to communities across Igboland. Some of these include AdaUgo-Igbo of Igbo-Ukwu, Anyanwu-Nri of Nri Kingdom, Ife of Abagana, Achala-Ugo of Okpuno, Ifekaolaedo of Ukpo, Nnedioranma of Aguata, Ifeomachukwumelu-Ndi-Anaocha and many more.

Senator Uche Ekwunife has received over 1,000 awards and honours, notable among them:

- The Sun Humanitarian Award (2021)
- Best Hon. Member House of Reps. 2008 – Foundation for Correction of Moral Decadence, 2009
- Legislative Excellence 2009- Award Media Events, 2009
- Appreciation Award by the Nigerian Christian Pilgrims Commission for being the highest individual sponsor of pilgrims – August 14, 2015
- Young Banker of the Year Award in 2001.

Senator Uche Ekwunife is married to Chief Larry Ekwunife (Ochendo), and together they are blessed with lovely children.