

**Aniekan Udoh**

Associate Director, Affordable Housing
Investment Sales, Lument*

INTRODUCTION

As a dual citizen of the U.S. and Nigeria, Aniekan Udoh, Associate Director, Affordable Housing Investment Sales at Lument, understands multiculturalism on a personal level. He spent his formative years from age three to 17 in Nigeria before relocating back to the U.S. and settling in Houston, Texas.

In our Black History Month profile, he discusses some of his experiences in Nigeria, his move from single-family to multifamily real estate, and how he was able to overcome self-doubt to establish a successful career in the commercial real estate industry.

What are your responsibilities as an associate director in Affordable Housing Investment Sales at Lument?

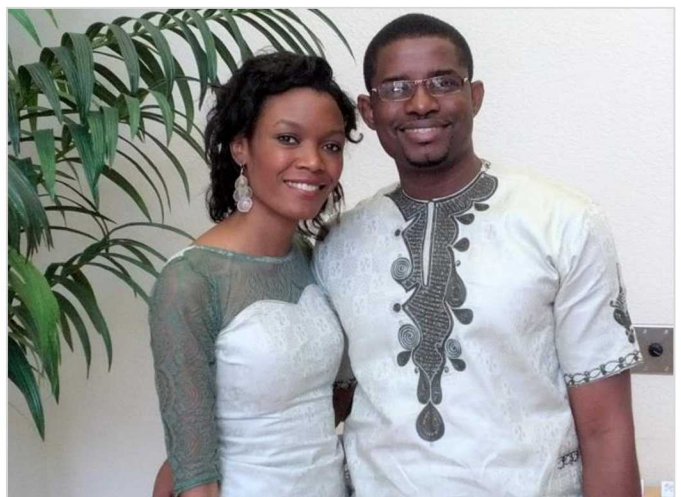
I play a dual role, managing transactions for two affordable housing investment sales brokers on our team and also sourcing and managing my own deals. As a transaction manager, it's my job to ensure every aspect of each deal gets done, including preparing the broker price opinion, getting the listing agreement, and conducting buyer/seller due diligence. As a broker, I help expand our business by sourcing and bringing in new deals to add to our pipeline.

What is your favorite part of the job?

I enjoy the search, tracking down a deal, and researching to locate a buyer. I also like analysis — crunching numbers and working on spreadsheets to get the actual value of a property. But my favorite part is the moment when I'm finally able to close the deal.

You spent part of your childhood in Nigeria. What was that like?

While I have lived most of my life in the U.S., I spent some formative years in Nigeria. After being born in the U.S., I moved to Nigeria at age



Aniekan and his wife, Uche, wear their Nigerian attire to church.

three and came back at age 17. My parents and siblings still live there. With this background, I feel like I can comfortably straddle both cultures. The beauty of the U.S. is that it's a multicultural place, and Houston, where I live, has a very robust Nigerian community.

“With my dual background [in the U.S. and Nigeria], I feel like I can comfortably straddle both cultures.”

In Nigeria, you worked for the National Youth Services Corps. Can you describe that?

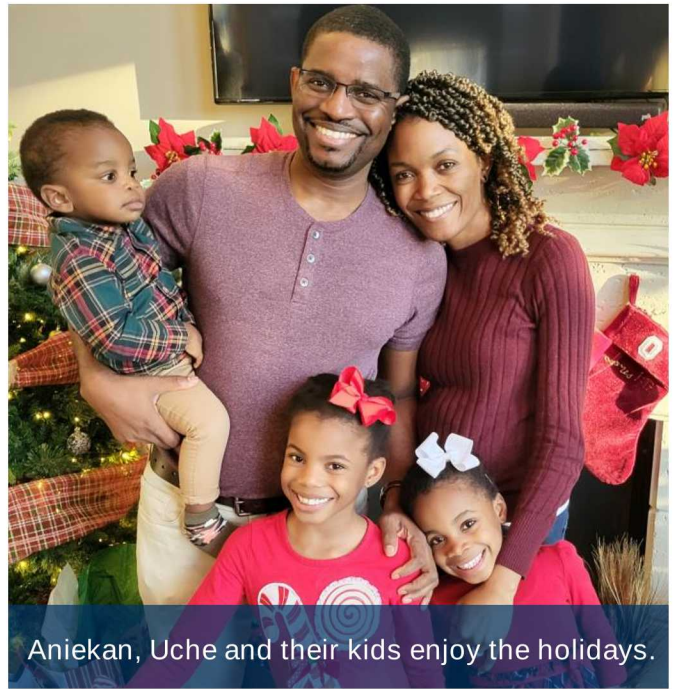
As a dual U.S./Nigerian citizen, I participated in Nigeria's mandatory year-long service program after I completed graduate school. I was part of a team that focused on the Millennium Development Goals program, developed by the World Health Organization and utilized by the Nigerian government as a basis for giving back to underserved communities. I helped provide education on ways to eradicate poverty, reduce child mortality, and combat infectious diseases, among other subjects.

How has your experience been in commercial real estate, an industry that is still working to improve its diversity?

Prior to joining Lument, I had switched careers from single-family to multifamily real estate, and I was surprised by the lack of diversity in the space. At first, at another firm, I didn't feel like I fit in and found the environment a little intimidating. After a lot of prayer and heart-to-heart conversations with my wife, I became determined to reset my thinking to try and avoid those negative thoughts. I realized that my only limitations were those that I imposed on myself. That was liberating, and once I changed my mindset, I began to achieve real progress and started completing more deals.

How would you describe the overall culture of Lument?

I'm on a small team, but it's been positive right from the beginning. I've felt welcomed at Lument, and I see a lot of intentionality to be inclusive.



Also, my experience has been greatly enhanced by mentors like Chris Bergmann, who introduced me to the multifamily world, and my current boss Cliff McDaniel, who has been a great support for me throughout my career.

“My favorite part is the moment when I'm finally able to close the deal.”

Can you share something about yourself that most people might not know about you?

I love to sing and play the guitar and djembe, an African hand drum. I also write songs. I'm self-taught, and I've been at it since I was a teenager. I have a wide variety of influences, including a Nigerian musician, Nathaniel Bassey. Many in the U.S. haven't heard of him, but he is one of my favorite artists. He performs Christian music and stylistically specializes in African Highlife, a traditional West African musical style that has influenced music and musicians worldwide.

* Lument, a subsidiary of ORIX USA, is a national leader in commercial real estate finance delivering a comprehensive set of capital solutions customized for investors in multifamily, affordable housing, and seniors housing and healthcare real estate.