Written by JREF Staff
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The James Randi Educational Foundation today announces the appointment of Leo Igwe as a research fellow. The appointment will support his work advancing skepticism throughout Africa and around the world. Mr. Igwe is a skeptical activist from Nigeria and a former representative of the International Humanist and Ethical Union. Currently, he is researching African witchcraft accusations and their social impact at the University of Bayreuth in Germany.

Mr. Igwe, in partnership with the JREF, will work to respond to harmful and growing superstitious beliefs throughout Africa, including belief in psuedoscientific “medicine,” and witchcraft, which result in heinous murders of adults and children alike. A recent poll showed that about 55% of people living in Africa believe in witchcraft, despite no evidence that these powers exist. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, a lack of science education was correlated with an increased belief in witchcraft, indicating a need for more education throughout Africa on the dangers of unfounded belief in the paranormal.

Igwe will report on the state of superstition and paranormal belief in Africa regularly at randi.org, with his column, *Skeptical Africa*. Through his work in the field and in academia, Mr. Igwe aims to better understand the causes of harmful and unfounded superstition across the continent, and to help combat it through educating the public, both in the U.S. and abroad.

He is also the author of the new *A Manifesto for a Skeptical Africa* , a call to arms for African skeptics, science advocates, humanists and secularists. The manifesto aims to promote skepticism in Africa and to help save lives. The manifesto has been endorsed by a number of leading figures, including prominent names in science and skepticism throughout Africa and globally.

"We at the JREF are proud to work with Mr. Leo Igwe in fighting deadly misinformation in Africa, and around the world,” said JREF founder James Randi. “Our mission of promoting

critical thinking wherever it is most needed, fits in perfectly with Mr. Igwe's very important work."

To make a donation to support the JREF's work educating the public about pseudoscience and the paranormal, click here . For more information about the JREF's research fellows, click here
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**To read *A Manifesto for a Skeptical Africa,* click here .**