**SOME STUDENTS HAVE A BACKGROUND, IDENTITY, INTEREST OR TALENT THAT IS SO MEANINGFUL THEY BELIEVE THEIR APPLICATION WOULD BE INCOMPLETE WITHOUT IT. IF THIS SOUNDS LIKE YOU, THEN PLEASE SHARE YOUR STORY**

Regarded as obnoxious by some and classified as a rambler by most, I was written off by many as just talkative earning me many nicknames like “parrot”, “microphone” and even “chatterbox”. Of course, these were people who only heard and never actually “listened” to what I said. I wasn’t intrigued by gossip or the ephemeral thrills of celebrity news, but instead I was captivated by theories, scientific discoveries ,and research. I talked to people about the experiments I had seen, scientific journals I had studied ,and theories I had developed about the physical probabilities of games I played. It was because of this that people who listened to me concluded that I wasn’t a noisemaker instead I was a gifted river of knowledge and my mouth was the waterfall. My teachers picked up on this talent and decided to channel my vocal energy. They signed me up for debates, class presentations and also as a newscaster,from which I later became the President of Press Club. I was talking my way to success.

However, my lifestyle wasn’t as “outspoken”. I never really liked going out a lot. I find solace in my room with me, myself and my laptop and receive all the friendship I need from my older brother. Maybe it’s because I was born into a family of introverts so, I grew up satisfied with minimal and close knit interactions or maybe because I was scared of embarrassing myself in front of a lot of people. Either way, most people thought someone like me would be quiet or withdrawn. Well, most people are terribly wrong then. The twist is, even with the given circumstances, I became a spicy, jovial and charismatic individual who had the strong desire to express himself and all the ideas in his head. It is this type of desire for eloquence that gives rise to artistic talents such as dancing, painting and even fashion, but I developed a more “audible” art form. I began to talk, a lot.

As I grew up, so did my talent and my love for science and technology thus leading me to choose computer engineering as my course. However, I had acquired a sense of insecurity regarding my talking and began seeing myself negatively as loquacious. But on one fateful day, I decided to go out and meet one of my friends ,who had lost his dad some years ago and was feeling very sober. As we were discussing about our life plans, he started crying and asked me why his dad had gone so soon without watching him grow up. And I told him, “ He didn’t leave you. He just went to tell God thank you for giving him a son like you”. I intended for this to lift his spirit but it seemed that my plan had surpassed my expectations. For the first time in weeks, he laughed the heartiest I had ever heard and he told me, “Never stop talking Jachi, you always know what to say”. I felt uplifted. It was like I had found the cure for a disease or made a breakthrough. Someone in this world was happier and it was because of what i said. It was in this magic moment that I knew this is not just a talent. It is a gift.

Talking is part of who I am and led me to who I want to become. My mouth is my channel for expression, my voice is me; my mouth is my microphone. In Igbo, Onuoha means “voice of the people” and I use it as just that. Besides, you can’t spell Jachimike without Mike (mic). This who I am. This is my identity.