

BEBUC Newsletter 2026

The annual magazine of BEBUC - N° 6 - October 2026



BEBUC, a unique and sustainable program for the renewal of excellence in higher-education institutions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)



The annual magazine of BEBUC

N° 6 - October 2026

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Preamble

BEBUC (Bourse d'Excellence Bringmann aux Universités Congolaises) is a unique scholarship program that offers, in addition to financial support, individualized mentorship to help its scholars achieve their vision of becoming professors at Congolese universities. To accomplish this, BEBUC selects excellent young Congolese pupils from primary and secondary schools, as well as outstanding students from Bachelor's and Master's study levels.

Today, BEBUC supports 161 covered scholars spread all over the world pursuing their studies at some of the most prestigious universities in Africa, Asia, America, and Europe. We are thrilled to announce that, since our last edition, six further BEBUC scholars have been appointed professors: Prof. Dr. Dav Ebengo, Prof. Dr. Arindo Akweni, Prof. Dr. Salomé Kahindo, Prof. Dr. Freddy Bangelesa, Prof. Dr. Tobit Liyandja Dja Liyandja, and Prof. Dr. Sephora Mian-da. They form part of a total of 26 BEBUC scholars who are now professors.

BEBUC scholars continuously distinguish themselves both within the Congo and internationally. We publish the *BEBUC Newsletter* to showcase these remarkable milestones to a global audience. While we are immensely proud of all our scholars' accomplishments, space limitations require us to carefully curate the stories in each edition. We select these highlights based on timeliness, relevance, and the specific theme of the newsletter.

Additionally, we are proud to report that seven new BEBUC PhD candidates successfully defended their theses. The newsletter also includes updates on the progress of our PhD candidates, Master's degree holder, Master's students, Bachelor's degree holders, and undergraduate students, as well as details on excursions and local activities organized in some towns.

We hope you enjoy reading the 6th edition of the *BEBUC Newsletter* !





Table of Contents

Preamble

1. BEBUC PhD Holders.....	5
2. BEBUC PhD Candidates	10
3. Master's Degree Holders	13
4. Master's Students.....	15
5. Bachelor's Degree Holders.....	18
6. Bachelor's Students	22
7. The BEBUC <i>Deutsch-Club</i> (BDC)	24
8. Mothers <i>in</i> BEBUC (MiB)	25
9. Fostering Excellence Through Democratic Leadership in BEBUC	26
10. Former BEBUC Scholars	27
Epilogue	29
The Directory Board of the NGO <i>f</i> UNIKIN and the Panel Members of the BEBUC Scholarship Program	30



BEBUC PhD Holders



Dr. Alain M. Bapolisi

Dr. Alain M. Bapolisi, a BEBUC scholar from the Official University of Bukavu (UOB) since 2012, has recently completed his PhD in Polymer Chemistry at the University of Potsdam (Germany) with the highest possible mark, “*summa cum laude*”. His research focused on the development and mechanistic understanding of antimicrobial polymers.

From 21 to 23 September 2025, Alain took part in the Bayreuth Polymer Symposium (BPS '25), a renowned biannual event that brings together polymer scientists from around the world at the University of Bayreuth, Germany. During the symposium, he presented a poster entitled “Non-amphiphilic Antimicrobial Polymers”, showcasing [a new class of antimicrobial materials](#) recently published in the highly renowned journal *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, with him as the first author. Among 109 posters presented at the conference, Alain's work was selected as one of the Top 3 Best Posters, an honor awarded by the Royal Society of Chemistry.



Dr. Hervé Monka Lekuya, MD, DTM&H, MMed, FCS, PhD



Dr. Lekuya is a neurosurgeon and neuroscientist affiliated with several academic institutions (Makerere University in Uganda, Ghent University in Belgium, and soon returning to the Université de Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo). He is one of the first two BEBUC scholars in Medicine, selected in 2009, when the scholarship program was still called BEBUC, and has since served as a Scholars' Speaker, Prime Speaker, and Tutor.

His remarkable story began in Kinshasa, where his passion for the mysteries of the brain and neurosciences took root at the University of Kinshasa. There, he completed his undergraduate biomedical studies, medical school, and medical internship with a record of outstanding academic excellence and distinction, supported by the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship program, managed by the German NGO fUNIKIN. Graduating as the overall best student of his class in a 7.5-year curriculum, he earned his Doctor of Medicine degree in 2012. While still in the medical school at the Université de Kinshasa, Hervé was already active in Neuroanatomy, fascinated by the brain and the complexity of the skull through the Club Vesale, where he taught junior students at the Faculty of Medicine.

Hervé's pursuit of surgical mastery led him across Africa, where he completed a six-month pre-residency in General Surgery and Neurosurgery at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, University of Ghana, Accra, with the support of the Holger-Pöhlmann-Stiftung. He also obtained a Professional Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine – East Africa Partnership. His drive for continuous learning took him to Uganda, where he completed a Master of Medicine in Surgery at Makerere University in 2017. He had an incredible journey at Makerere University and took great pleasure in medical research and teaching. He then joined the regional neurosurgical residency program (equivalent to a Clinical Master II) of the College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa (COSECSA), supported jointly by the Duke Global Neurology and Neurosurgery Program (DGNN) and the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS) Foundation. Doctor Lekuya successfully completed the training and passed the COSECSA board examinations for his neurosurgery fellowship in 2022 in Windhoek, Namibia.

Throughout his journey, Hervé has continuously sought opportunities to expand his expertise at an international level. In 2018, he received the NuVasive Scholarship for Neurosurgical Trainees and completed a three-month clinical observership and research fellowship in Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery and Navigation at Weill Cornell Neurological Surgery in New York City. He returned to Weill Cornell in 2022 and again in 2023 under the prestigious FIENS-Bassett Fellowship for advanced training in Skull Base and Microneurosurgery, following an earlier cadaveric fellowship in Skull Base Surgery. He was a multiple-time fellow of the AAF/OMI Seminars in Salzburg and completed an observership in Neurosurgery at the Medical University of Vienna.

Toward the end of his neurosurgical training, Hervé began his PhD studies supported by a fellowship in collaboration with Makerere University and Ghent University and was awarded his PhD degree at Ghent University in 2025. Dr. Lekuya served as a Neurosurgery Fellow at both Makerere University/Mulago

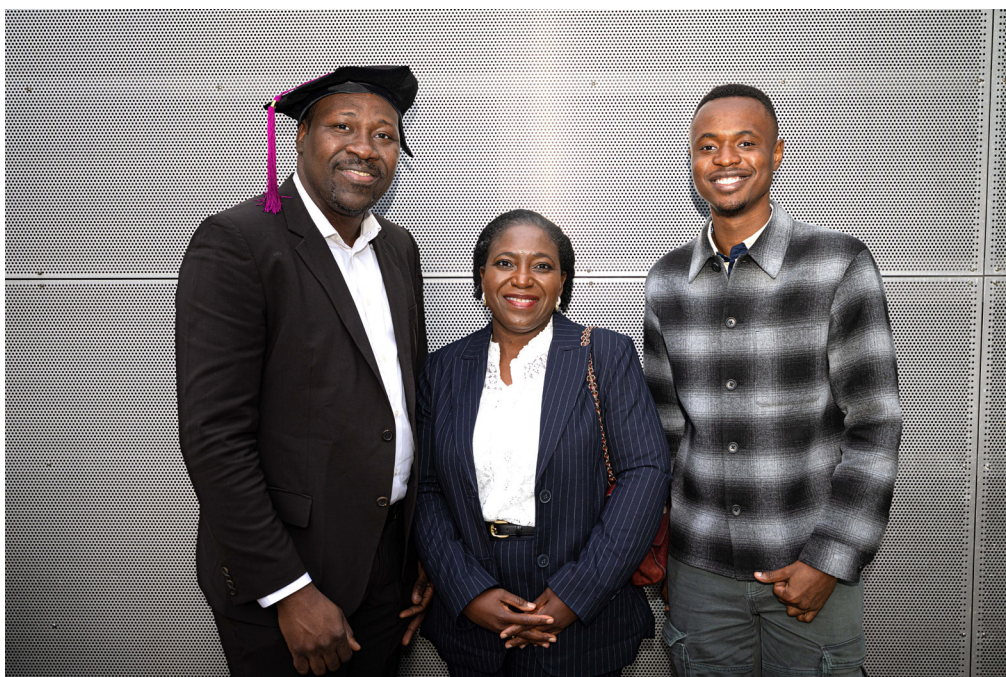
Hospital and Ghent University Hospital, widely known as Universitair Ziekenhuis Gent (UZ Gent). There, he led internationally funded research projects, mentored students in neuroanatomy and dissection, and facilitated academic seminars that bridged knowledge between Africa and Europe. His research achievements have been supported by several competitive grants, including the NIH Brain Health Training Grant at Makerere University, the BOF Mobility Scholarship of Ghent University, the Duke Global Health Institute NIH Pilot Grant in Neurosurgical Research, and the Makerere Research Innovation Fund (Mak-RIF), among other smaller grants.

Hervé's commitment to research and clinical excellence has earned him global recognition. In 2019, he was named among the top five young academic surgeons in Africa and received the International Society of Surgery (ISS) Foundation Travel Scholarship Award in Kraków, Poland. He was later honored as one of the 25 most promising young academic clinicians worldwide by the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) in Berlin in 2022. The following year, the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS) recognized him as the recipient of the prestigious WFNS Young Neurosurgeon of the World title during the World Biennial Congress in Cape Town. He also received several distinguished awards and medals of Excellence.

Beyond his research, Dr. Lekuya continues to shape the future of medicine through education and mentorship. At Makerere University, he teaches in the Department of Surgery, where he remains deeply engaged in patient care, medical education, and the supervision of young doctors. He has published more than 40 articles in high-impact and reputable scholarly journals, many as first or senior author, contributing to the advancement of neurosurgery, brain health, and surgical training in Africa. He is also a frequent invited reviewer for academic selections and has attended several high-impact scientific congresses as a speaker or session chair.

Today, Hervé stands as a proud member of the Academy of Young Scientists of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (ASJ-DRC) and recently represented the DRC as a true ambassador of science during the IAP Triennial Conference and General Assembly together with The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) in Cairo, Egypt, in December 2025, attended by 164 participants from 68 countries. He also serves on the Executive Committee of the Continental Association of African Neurosurgical Societies (CAANS), where he oversees neurosurgical education across the continent. He is a member of several scientific bodies, including the Neurosurgery Society of Uganda, La Société Congolaise de Neurochirurgie, and AO Spine.

Hervé Monka Lekuya is a true figure among BEBUC scholars in terms of excellence, resilience, discipline, and vision. He is now returning to contribute to the development and advancement of neurosurgery and neurosciences in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the Université de Kinshasa as an academic and lecturer, where it all began.



Dr. Kitoga Lungele Steve



Kitoga Lungele Steve has held a doctorate in Isotope Geochemistry since the memorable date of 24 September 2024, obtained through a co-tutelle program between Stellenbosch University in South Africa and Université Clermont Auvergne in France. He was selected as a BEBUC scholar in April 2017, while he was a Bachelor's student in Exploration Geology at the Université Officielle de Bukavu (UOB). Directly after graduating from UOB, he received a two-year BEBUC Master's scholarship to study Geochemistry at the University of Johannesburg. He completed his Master's degree as the best finalist of the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Johannesburg in September 2021. Notably, he was awarded a doctoral fellowship from the French CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique).

Since completing his doctoral studies, he has been working as a postdoctoral researcher at Université Clermont Auvergne in France. Very recently, he was awarded the prestigious Humboldt Postdoctoral Fellowship in Germany to conduct isotopic research at the University of Göttingen.

Looking back, he recognizes that his experience with BEBUC has significantly influenced his academic journey. The financial support and academic guidance he received at the beginning of his career sharpened his ambition to succeed in research, resulting in a successful trajectory as both a student and a researcher abroad. He also emphasizes the importance of mentorship received from fellow BEBUC scholars throughout his journey. Notable examples include the support of Franck Zahinda, who welcomed him to Johannesburg, as well as the valuable advice provided by Dr. Alain Bapolisi, Justin Safari, and Prof. Christian Nkanga in securing admission to a Master's program.

He expresses a strong desire to give back and support BEBUC's noble initiative by contributing to the training of the next generation of leaders and geologists in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, the political situation in the eastern part of the country, from where he originates, along with the challenges of securing stable academic appointments with adequate compensation, continues to complicate long-term career decisions.

Nevertheless, he has already begun contributing by serving as a visiting professor at UOB since July 2025, largely at his own expense this year, and he hopes to find a sustainable balance between serving the Congolese university system and maintaining personal well-being.



Dr. Bienfait Kabuyaya Isamura

Bienfait Kabuyaya Isamura is a BEBUC scholar from Butembo, who joined the BEBUC Scholarship Program in 2012 as a high-school student. He later pursued an undergraduate degree in Physical Chemistry and Computer Science at the University of Kinshasa. Following his outstanding academic performance, he was awarded a BEBUC Master's scholarship to continue his studies at Rhodes University in South Africa.

He completed his Master's degree in Computational Chemistry in just one year, graduating with an outstanding mark of 94%. During this time, he received the prestigious S2A3 Bronze Medal, awarded each year to the top research Master's student across several higher-education institutions in South Africa. He was also one of the BEBUC scholars honored with a Certificate of Excellence from BEBUC and SENAREC (Secrétariat National pour le Renforcement des Capacités) in recognition of exceptional academic achievements at both national and international levels.

In September 2022, Bienfait joined the PhD program in Theoretical Chemistry at the University of Manchester (United Kingdom), where he conducted his research under the supervision of Prof. Paul Popelier. He completed his PhD at the age of 29 and is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Quantum Chemical Topology group at the University of Manchester.

His research focuses on the development of machine-learning force fields for biomolecular simulations and the investigation of non-covalent interactions. He has authored more than 30 scientific publications, including approximately ten as the first author, and has an H-index of 11. His latest work, published in *Nature Communications Chemistry*, presents a machine-learning force field based on topological atomic energies, which demonstrates exceptional robustness for high-temperature molecular simulations.

Beyond his research career, Bienfait aims to contribute to the development of scientific capacity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by reintegrating into the academic system as an Associate Professor. Through his involvement with the Research Center for Theoretical Chemistry and Physics in Central Africa, he also hopes to establish long-term collaborations between computational and theoretical chemists at the University of Manchester and researchers at the University of Kinshasa, helping to train and inspire the next generation of Congolese scientists.

BEBUC PhD Candidates

Masika Kighana Espérance



Masika Kighana Espérance, born on 4 December 1991 in Kayna in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has been a BEBUC scholar since 2012. She is married and a mother of two children, and she currently serves as the Vice-Speaker of [Mothers in BEBUC](#) (MiB).

She obtained her Master's degree in Money, Banking and Finance in 2016 from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana. Since 2019, she has been serving as the Head of the Provincial Direction of the Federation of Enterprises of Congo (FEC) in North Kivu. In parallel, she has been pursuing her PhD studies in Economics at the Catholic University of Graben since 2023 and has worked as an assistant in Economics at the same institution since 2014.

Through her professional journey, Masika Kighana Espérance has benefited from several trainings supported by the Federation of Enterprises of Congo. On 10 February 2025, she was certified by the Collège de Paris as an expert in defining and implementing development strategies for organizations at both national and international levels, with a distinction grade of 16.5 out of 20.

She has developed strong expertise in supporting private-sector companies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo toward sustainable development. Her work focuses on helping organizations define strategic objectives, analyze their economic environment, position their activities and services effectively, and identify the human, financial, and material resources required for growth and long-term impact. In addition to her professional responsibilities, she is actively involved in mentoring final-year students by providing entrepreneurial guidance and support.





Nathan Okole



Reception of the Nachwuchspreis at the Deutsche Pflanzenschutztagung Conference



Reception of the GIL Award at the GIL Conference

During his Master's studies at the University of Göttingen, Nathan Okole worked on digital and sustainable solutions for virus yellows disease in sugar beet, using optical sensors, remote sensing, and artificial intelligence to support the breeding of tolerant varieties.

His thesis included two peer-reviewed studies: one conducted in the greenhouse using hyperspectral imaging and machine learning to identify infection in plants, and another carried out in the field using drone imagery and neural networks to detect and monitor the disease. These results demonstrated the promise of digital technologies for plant health monitoring and agricultural resilience.

For this work, Nathan was honored with two prestigious awards: the 2025 [Nachwuchspreis of the Deutsche Phytomedizinische Gesellschaft](#) (DPG), recognizing outstanding scientific achievements by early-career researchers in phytomedicine, and the [2025 GIL Award](#) for the best Master's thesis from the Society for Computer Science in Agriculture, Forestry and Food Industry (GIL, *Gesellschaft für Informatik in der Land-, Forst- und Ernährungswirtschaft*).

These recognitions have encouraged him to continue his academic journey. He is currently pursuing a PhD at the Institute of Sugar Beet Research (Germany), where he aims to further contribute to innovation in digital plant health.

Nigene Ernestine

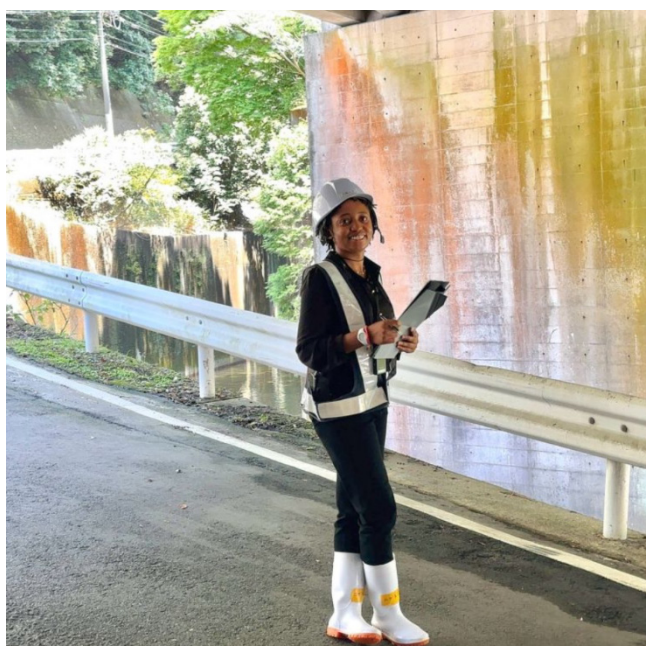


Nigene Ndeze Ernestine has been a BEBUC scholar since September 2013. She received the scholarship while pursuing her Bachelor's study in Civil Engineering at the Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL) in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, from which she graduated in July 2016. In September 2018, she was awarded the Freshman Scholarship, enabling her to pursue a Master's degree in Civil Engineering at the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture (BUCEA) in Beijing, China, where she graduated in June 2021.

In December 2024, she was awarded a JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) scholarship under the Road Asset Management Program (RAMP), a collaborative initiative between Japan and partner countries aimed at strengthening infrastructure resilience and management capacity. Nigene is currently a PhD student at the Kanazawa Institute of Technology (KIT) in Japan, within the Institute of Disaster and Prevention Science, where she began her doctoral studies in April 2025.

Prior to her studies in Japan, she worked in the Province of Ituri (DRC) as a Chargée des Études at the Bureau Technique de Contrôle (BTC), a public institution responsible for the technical and financial oversight of infrastructure projects funded by the Congolese Government. She has also been serving as a lecturer at ULPGL since 2020, teaching courses related to bridge engineering.

Her current research focuses on the durability of reinforced concrete bridge elements under Congolese environmental conditions, with the goal of supporting the development of safer and more sustainable infrastructure in the region.



Master's Degree Holders



Gloire Kasereka Kasitu

In August 2022, with the financial and mentorship support from BEBUC and his BEBUC personal sponsor, Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Mufusama, Gloire embarked on his MSc journey in a joint program between Makerere University (Uganda) and the University of Siegen (Germany). For his MSc thesis, Gloire conducted a pioneering in-depth phytochemical investigation on a yet unexplored *Ancistrocladus* sp. (Banalia), focusing on the bioprospection for novel antimalarial compounds and ultimately resulted in the isolation and identification of two naphthylisoquinoline (NIQ) alkaloids by means of modern analytical techniques, which he quickly mastered under the supervision of leading experts in this research field, namely Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Gerhard Bringmann (University of Würzburg), Prof. Dr. Heiko Ihmels (University of Siegen), and Dr. Jane Namukobe (Makerere University). Interestingly, the two identified NIQ compounds were previously reported for their promising antiplasmodial activity and therefore represent suitable candidates for antimalarial drug development in accordance with the World Health Organization criteria. For supporting his impactful research stay, the University of Siegen awarded him the [STIBET I fellowship](#) under the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). He completed his MSc program with a competitive CGPA (cumulative grade point average) of 4.46/5.0 and graduated on 25 February 2026.



Throughout his MSc program, Gloire attended several international scientific events. The most notable of these include the 60th *Naturstoffchemikertreffen* (Natural Product Chemists' Meeting) on 6 October 2023 in Würzburg, Germany, and the 21st NAPRECA (Natural Products Research Network for Eastern and Central Africa) International Symposium held from 1 to 3 November 2025 at Makerere University, where he distinguished himself by winning the Best Poster Presenter Prize.

Gloire joined BEBUC in March 2019 and has demonstrated strong community engagement. He served as the Speaker of UNIKIS BEBUC Scholars (2019–2022). He is also the Co-Founder and Vice-Speaker of the BEBUC *Deutsch-Club* (BDC) and Chief of the Prime Speaker's Cabinet (2024–present).

Eventually, Gloire is looking forward to pursuing a PhD program in drug biodiscovery and development.

Doctor Hervé Mbala Lubaki, MD, DES in Cardiology



Doctor Hervé Mbala Lubaki has been a BEBUC scholar since 2014 at the Université Protestante au Congo (UPC) in Kinshasa (DRC). In October 2018, he completed a Bachelor's degree program in Medicine at the same university. After three years as a general practitioner at the Hôpital Général de Référence de Kitambo (Kinshasa) as well as in some private clinics of Kinshasa, Doctor Hervé Lubaki enrolled in a four-year Diploma program of Specialized Studies in Cardiology at the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) with a BEBUC Master's scholarship. There, he rotated through several departments, including General Cardiology, Cardiovascular Surgery, Pediatric Cardiology, Cardiac Emergency Unit, Cardiac Intensive Care Unit, Cardiovascular Diagnostic Unit, and Interventional Cardiology Unit.



Doctor Hervé Lubaki participated in several scientific conferences of the Ivorian Society of Cardiology (SICARD) and the Journées Africaines de Cardiologie Interventionnelle (JAFICI), where he also presented an e-poster on "Peripheral arterial disease of the lower limbs in diabetic and hypertensive patients". In February 2025, he received an award from the Amicale des Médecins Internes et CES (Certificat d'Études Spéciales) de l'Institut de Cardiologie d'Abidjan (AMICCAR) in recognition of his outstanding achievements during his third year of cardiology residency. In August 2025, Doctor Hervé Lubaki completed his Diploma program of Specialized Studies in Cardiology upon a successful public defense of his thesis focusing on atrial fibrillation in elderly patients. In June 2026, he brilliantly completed the Diploma training program of hypertension and its cardio-renal complications at Strasbourg University (France).

Doctor Hervé Lubaki has a strong interest in interventional rhythmology, especially in interventional cardiac electrophysiology. In the DRC, it is estimated that there are as few as two rhythmologists trained in interventional cardiac electrophysiology. Therefore, he is planning to pursue further training in this particular field in order to develop it in the country. Currently, he works as a cardiologist in Kinshasa, in both public and private hospitals. He is highly involved in the prevention and management of hypertension and its complications.

Master's Students



Espérance Kandjale

Espérance officially started her courses on 13 October 2025. She joined the EAGLE (Earth Observation and Geoanalysis of the Living Environment) Master's program in Würzburg, Germany, a program that perfectly matches her academic interests and passion for Earth Observation and Environmental Management.

This new step presents an opportunity for her to contribute more effectively to sustainable development and natural resource management in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since her admission to the University of Würzburg, Espérance has received remarkable support from Prof. Dr. Freddy Bangelesa, a BEBUC Panel Member, who assisted her throughout the travel processes, warmly welcomed her to Würzburg, and continues to provide guidance and support during her studies.



Doctor Gauthier Bahizire Murhula



Gauthier Bahizire Murhula has been a BEBUC scholar since 2012. He graduated in Medicine from the Catholic University of Bukavu (UCB) with multiple distinctions, achieving an average of 82% over the seven years of medical school. After his internship in the surgical department at the Hôpital Provincial Général de Référence de Bukavu, he was appointed registrar in its surgery department, before joining Tanzania to begin his postgraduate studies in plastic surgery under the College of Surgeons of Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa at Muhimbili National Hospital in December 2023, with financial support from BEBUC. In January 2024, he was awarded a five-year Operation Smile grant to study plastic and reconstructive surgery under COSECSA, with the aim of returning to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly the eastern region, to address the burden of plastic and reconstructive surgical conditions. This scholarship aligns with the vision of BEBUC to give back to the community and contribute to the training of future professionals.

This is a five-year program divided into two parts: Membership of the College of Surgeons (MCS) for two years, during which trainees acquire the basic principles of surgery and rotate through all surgical subspecialties, and Fellowship of the College of Surgeons (FCS) in Plastic Surgery for three years, during which they are trained to become board-certified plastic surgeons.

He completed his MCS under the COSECSA program in December 2025 with notable achievements, including a written exam score of 90.8% and an oral exam score of 85.4%, five publications (with first authorship on two of them and acknowledgment of the BEBUC program), four certificates of training (Basic Surgical Skills, Enhanced Recovery After Surgery, Oncology, and the Thoracic and Vascular Series 2024 and 2025), and participation in two conferences (the Tanzanian Association of Surgery and the COSECSA Annual Meeting).



The next three years of fellowship in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery will run from January 2026 to December 2028. He will be based in Uganda at Kiruddu National Referral Hospital, located in Kampala, with external rotations across the ECSA region and overseas.



Salomon Kulondwa Metre

Salomon Metre was selected as a BEBUC scholar in 2015. In 2019, as part of the high school finalists cohort representing Alfajiri High School, he won the Bronze Medal in a mathematics contest organized by Strathmore University. This achievement earned him a scholarship to pursue a Diploma in Business Information Technology at Strathmore University in Nairobi, undertaken with the approval and support of BEBUC. He completed the diploma program with First Class Honors, which granted him a scholarship extension to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Informatics and Computer Science.

Between February and June 2024, Salomon completed an exchange semester at the Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France in Valenciennes (France), supported by a scholarship from the French Government. Alongside his academic pursuits, he volunteered at Kwetu Home of Peace, a rehabilitation center for street boys in Nairobi (Kenya), where he taught basic arithmetic. He also served as a university lab assistant, managing computer labs to ensure a conducive learning environment for both lecturers and students. Within BEBUC, Salomon has been active, serving as a speaker of the External Virtual Institute, the current secretary of both the Prime Speaker's Cabinet and the Electoral Commission, and the maintainer of bebuc.org.

He completed the Bachelor's degree in June 2025 with First Class Honors, having appeared on the Dean's List every academic year. His undergraduate thesis focused on developing the first Nande-French automatic translator using state-of-the-art Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques. His work in machine translation also includes a Luo-Swahili model, which he was invited to present at a workshop during IndabaX Kenya 2025, one of the major AI events in the country.

Currently, Salomon is in his first year of a Master's program in Natural Language Processing at the Université de Lorraine (France). Supported fully by BEBUC and his personal sponsor, the BEBUC scholar Espoir Murhula, he aims to develop and refine his skills in machine translation and language modeling to build locally relevant and ethically grounded tools for African languages.



Bachelor's Degree Holders

Katembo Muvatsi Messenger



A BEBUC scholar since October 2022, Katembo Muvatsi Messenger holds a Bachelor's degree (BAC +5) in Organic Chemistry from the Université de Kisangani (UNIKIS), with excellent results, including two distinctions and one great distinction.

In 2019 and 2020, he was a recipient of the Ngalula Mubenga Excellence Scholarship awarded by Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) DRC. Additionally, in 2024, upon presenting his Bachelor's research project titled "Formulation trial of bioinsecticides based on essential oils of *Cymbopogon citratus* and *Eucalyptus globulus* effective against *Anopheles* mosquitoes", Messenger successfully highlighted, in a 180-second video, the connection between his project and the sustainable development objectives and was subsequently awarded the Engineers Without Borders – Belgium Sulmon Prize. This prize is reserved for the latest cohort of graduates from higher engineering education institutions in African countries that are members of the International Organization of La Francophonie. Specifically, it recognizes a Bachelor's research project that contributes to the development of new technologies aligned with sustainable development objectives.

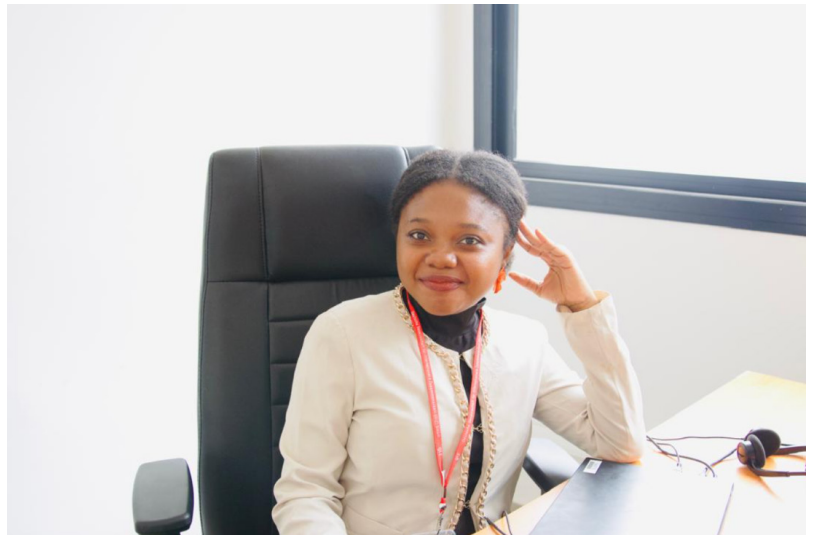




Monica Obendus Omey

Monica has been a BEBUC scholar since 2015, when she was a 3rd-year secondary-school student at Mont-Amba School. In July 2024, she graduated with distinction (75%) from the University of Kinshasa with a degree in Agronomic Sciences, specializing in natural resource management. While preparing her final thesis in January 2024, she applied to the Central Africa Women's Initiative for Climate Action, supported by the United States Forest Service, and was selected as 1 of 10 women to complete a 1-year online course in greenhouse-gas accounting through the Greenhouse Gas Management Institute's Learning Management System. The course provided the foundational knowledge needed for her planned Master's degree in climate change and energy transition.

After the training, Monica completed a 3-month internship at the Central African Forest Satellite Observatory, where her main assignment was to estimate carbon dioxide emissions caused by peatland degradation in Mongala Province between 2010 and 2020. In January 2025, she was



selected as 1 of 15 fellows from more than 800 applicants for the Congolese Academy of Negotiators Programme. During the intensive 3-month programme, she studied international environmental negotiations, the 3 Rio Conventions, multilateral agreements and the principles of environmental diplomacy. She also contributed to an advocacy note promoting the inclusion of young people in environmental negotiations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which was officially submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

Monica is currently completing a professional internship at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the German agency for international cooperation, where she contributes to the Water-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus project. This experience allows her to strengthen her technical skills while contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Throughout her secondary-school, academic and professional journey, BEBUC has supported her through seminars, essential research training and opportunities to improve her English proficiency, while also providing knowledge useful in other areas of her life. She remains deeply grateful to the members of the programme for their support in her continuing pursuit of excellence.

Ashuza-Mungu Junior



Ashuza-Mungu Junior, a BEBUC scholar since 2022, who graduated from the Université Evangélique en Afrique (UEA) with a Distinction in Agronomy in November 2025, demonstrated exceptional leadership during the 2023–2024 academic year as the elected coordinator of the Student Research Circle in Agronomy (CEREA).

Collaborating with academic authorities and international partners, including the Rufford Foundation, Harvest Plus, and CAMI South-Kivu, Junior successfully spearheaded the organization of three major scientific events at UEA. These included the International Legume Day Conference, which addressed food security and the ecological impacts of local mining; the International Social Work Day at the Denis Mukwege Center of Excellence, which highlighted the crucial role of women agronomists in the DRC; and the faculty’s annual “Engineer Week”, which focused on community resilience and agro-ecological approaches to climate change.





Doctor Priscille Bampata

In 2025, Priscille Bampata reached a major milestone in her academic journey as she successfully completed her medical studies and became a doctor after eight years of dedication and perseverance. This achievement comes after a demanding final phase marked by the grand jury, which she successfully overcame despite the challenges of stress, doubt, and fatigue.

Her accomplishments do not only mark the culmination of years of rigorous training, but also the beginning of a new professional chapter. Beyond clinical practice, she expresses a strong commitment to medical education and the transmission of knowledge. She aspires to contribute to the training of future generations of physicians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, promoting excellence, empathy, and integrity in medical education.



Bachelor's Students

Laurène Heri Wangivirwa



Laurène Heri Wangivirwa has been a BEBUC scholar since October 2022. She is a fifth-year student in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Université Catholique du Graben (UCG).

In 2025, she has been among the six Holger-Pöhlmann small research grant awardees at the Université Catholique du Graben as her research project about “Green synthesis and evaluation of the antibacterial and antifungal activity of the nanostructures of *Lantana camara*, *Rosmarinus officinalis*, and *Psidium guajava*: formulation of a topical solution for wound cleaning and healing”.





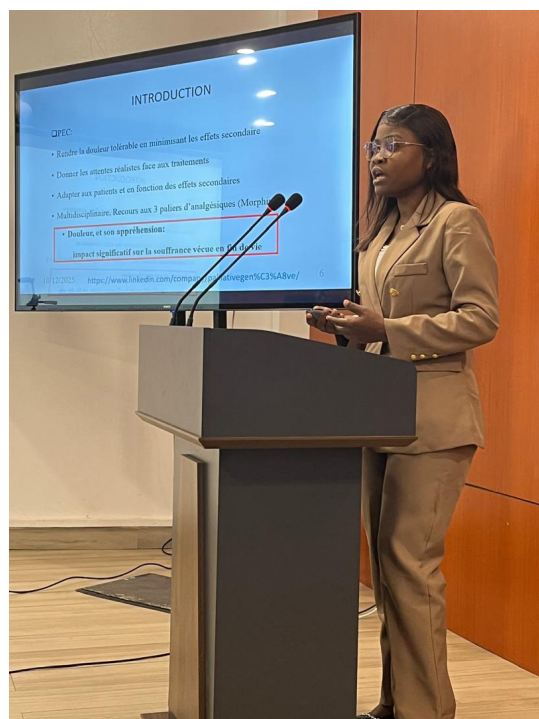
Marie-Etienne Masesi Lusasi is a medical doctor specializing in surgical oncology in Dakar (Senegal). The year 2025 has marked a significant milestone in her academic and professional journey, highlighted by her participation in several major scientific meetings.

In May 2025, during the Scientific Days of Hôpital Principal de Dakar, she presented on “Management of Prostate Cancer in Resource-Limited Settings: Experience of the Urology Department of Hôpital Principal de Dakar”.

At the 38th Annual Days of General Surgery, she delivered two presentations: “Oncoplastic Breast Surgery in the Conservative Treatment of Breast Cancer” and “Giant Prehernal Inguinal Lipoma: A Case Report and Literature Review”.

In September 2025, she participated in the 8th Congress of the African Palliative Care Association, held in Botswana, to mark the 20th anniversary of palliative care and chronic disease management in developing countries. She delivered an oral presentation titled “Prise en charge de la douleur en situation palliative chez les patients hospitalisés au Centre Hospitalo-Universitaire Dalal Jamm”. Her participation was made possible through the BEBUC scholarship.

Marie-Etienne Lusasi delivering her oral presentation in Botswana



The BEBUC *Deutsch-Club* (BDC)

The BEBUC *Deutsch-Club* (BDC), born from an inspiring dialogue between BEBUC Scholar Elie Nyamuhirwa and Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Gerhard Bringmann in 2022, stands today as one of BEBUC's most dynamic initiatives promoting cultural exchange and leadership development. Officially launched on 22 June 2024, the club has quickly grown to 34 active members, including 23 founding members drawn from across the Democratic Republic of the Congo, other African countries, and Germany. Since its creation, the BDC has achieved remarkable progress in advancing its mission of linking language learning with leadership and personal growth.



**Elie Nyamuhirwa, Founder
and Speaker of the BDC**



**Gloire Kasereka Kasitu,
Co-Founder and Vice-Speaker
of the BDC**

Eight members have already completed their A1-level German courses, and the club is now preparing them to register for certification exams at the Goethe Institute, marking a concrete step toward academic excellence and international readiness. Regular German language classes have been established, offering its members a structured environment to practice speaking, reading, and writing, while cultural discussions on Germany's history and leadership have inspired participants to apply similar values of resilience, discipline, and innovation in their own communities. Through these activities, the BDC has become a genuine hub for intellectual exchange, where the German model of efficiency and leadership is studied as a source of inspiration for sustainable development in the DRC.

Beyond language acquisition, the club provides its members with free learning resources and exposure to German thought and culture, helping them grow both personally and professionally. This access does not only equip them for future academic and career opportunities in German-speaking environments but also strengthens their sense of purpose as young leaders determined to contribute to their country's progress.

Looking toward 2026, the BEBUC *Deutsch-Club* envisions expanding its reach by deepening German-Congolese partnerships, enhancing language and cultural immersion programs, and organizing leadership workshops grounded in the German model of excellence. In less than two years after its inception, the BDC has proven to be far more than a language club, it is a community of motivated young Congolese scholars, united by a shared commitment to learning, leadership, and cultural understanding, shaping the future of the DRC. Further information about the BDC can be found [here](#).

Mothers in BEBUC



Rachel Kataraka

Mothers in BEBUC (MiB) is an initiative developed to support and empower Congolese students who are both BEBUC scholars and mothers. Conceived by Prof. Dr. h.c. mult. Gerhard Bringmann and endorsed by the BEBUC Panel, the program addresses the enormous multiple challenges faced by scholar-mothers in balancing academic ambitions with family responsibilities.

MiB was established in recognition of the dual roles many female scholars undertake, combining demanding academic paths with motherhood. The initiative serves as a platform for orientation, exchange, and mutual support, enabling the members to share experiences, access resources, and encourage one another to pursue excellence while managing both personal and professional commitments.

The group currently brings together 15 members, with a total of 25 children. It is led by a team of five coordinators with diverse academic and professional backgrounds, spanning medicine, economics, molecular biology, engineering, and education. In addition, MiB includes several scholar-mothers engaged in advanced studies and professional careers across fields such as public health, infectious diseases, human resources, agriculture, environmental sciences, obstetrics and gynecology, and bioinformatics.

Through its activities, MiB fosters a strong sense of community by offering peer support, facilitating knowledge and resource sharing, organizing academic and professional webinars, and promoting mentorship among its members. The initiative reflects BEBUC's broader commitment to advancing women in science and higher education, while recognizing and supporting the realities of motherhood within academic life. More details about MiB can be accessed [here](#).



Kataraka Minja Rachel, Medical Doctor, MSc in Public Health, PhD Candidate in Public Health and Biosciences at Edouardo Mondlane University, Mozambique. Here with her five children Cohen, Noam, Malia, Yohann, and Yakhin

Fostering Excellence Through Democratic Leadership in BEBUC

In BEBUC, the concept of excellence extends far beyond outstanding academic performance alone. It equally encompasses ethical values such as integrity, responsibility, and transparency; linguistic competence, particularly effective communication in both spoken and written English, which is increasingly establishing itself as the medium of instruction and scientific research globally; and, eventually, social competence that is reflected in the ability to collaborate with others, contribute meaningfully to the community, and demonstrate leadership. The BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program is hence committed to promote exemplary leadership among all of its scholars through a well-established, inclusive, transparent, and dynamic democratic system. At the local level, BEBUC scholars across various cities and institutions elect their own representatives, known as Speakers, along with Vice-Speakers. Internationally, scholars based abroad form the External Virtual Institute (EVI), currently the largest BEBUC community, which similarly elects a representative called External Speaker, along with four External Vice-Speakers. All Speakers and Vice-Speakers, both local and international, form the Speakers' Council, which is chaired by the Prime Speaker and two Vice-Prime Speakers, themselves elected by the Speakers and Vice-Speakers, including those of the EVI. The Prime Speaker then appoints additional qualified and experienced BEBUC scholars to complete the constitution of the full Cabinet.

The Prime Speaker's Cabinet currently comprises the following members:

1. Prime Speaker: Eve Loando Kavira
2. First Vice-Prime Speaker: Felly Nzengu Nzengu
3. Second Vice-Prime Speaker: Kein Kalume Kamwanga
4. Chief of Cabinet: Gloire Kasereka Kasitu
5. Head of Secretariat: Salomon Kulondwa Metre
6. Advisor: Doctor Céleste Musasa
7. MiB Delegate: Yvette Kalimumbalo

Former BEBUC Scholars

Doctor Muco Mugisha Mc Juan, MD



Doctor Muco Mugisha Mc Juan was a BEBUC scholar from 2012 to 2017; he belonged to the first cohort of BEBUC scholars in Bukavu. He obtained his Bachelor of Medicine degree from the Université Catholique de Bukavu (UCB), supported by the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program.



During his studies, he completed a two-month internship in the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics at HEAL Africa Hospital (Goma), funded by the Holger-Pöhlmann Foundation. He later undertook his final 18-month internship at the Hôpital Provincial Général de Référence de Bukavu (HPGRB), graduating with distinction.

Following his medical training, Doctor Muco completed professional practice at HPGRB before successfully passing the Rwanda Medical and Dental Council (RMDC) licensing examination with Great Distinction. His results were published on 4 December 2018, on the RMDC official website.

He subsequently worked in Rwanda for two and a half years, serving in several referral public hospitals, including Gisenyi, Nyamata, and Butaro, as well as in private clinical settings. He later joined the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), where he worked for 14 months at the Level 1 Clinic in Malakal, Upper Nile State.

Since June 2022, Doctor Muco has been working with the Rinda Ubuzima Research Organization (Rwanda) as a Study Physician and Principal Investigator in multiple clinical trials. His current research focuses on vaccine and therapeutic studies, including vaccine trials such as VIBRI COVID-19-001-2021 (supported by CEPI) and 223247 RTS, S Malaria Vaccine (sponsored by GSK), as well as treatment trials including CKAE609B12201, CKLU156A12301, and CADPT13A12201 (sponsored by Novartis), and MPZ-MAL-01 (sponsored by Jiangsu Pacific Meinuo Biopharmaceutical Co.).



Prof. Dr. Christian I. Nkanga

Christian I. Nkanga, PhD, is a Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, with expertise in nanotechnology, biomaterials, drug delivery, and translational pharmaceutical research. He graduated with a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Kinshasa in 2014 and was subsequently awarded the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship to pursue postgraduate studies at Rhodes University in South Africa, where he completed both his Master's and doctoral degrees.

In 2020, Prof. Nkanga undertook postdoctoral research in nanoengineering at the University of California, San Diego, for two years. Upon returning to the University of Kinshasa, he served as an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. In 2022, he received the African Research Initiative for Scientific Excellence (ARISE) award, which enabled him to establish a nanotechnology laboratory at the University of Kinshasa.

Building on his several research grants, Prof. Nkanga co-founded, in 2024, the Centre de Recherche en Nanotechnologies Appliquées aux Produits Naturels (CRenAPN), the first nanotechnology research center in DRC. In the same year, he was inducted as a member of the Global Young Academy (GYA) and was, one year later, elected to serve on its Executive Committee. In 2025, he was promoted to a Full Professor in Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Kinshasa.

Prof. Nkanga is also the author of *Invisible Fixes*, a narrative nonfiction book that combines memoir, science communication, and a policy-oriented reflection on translational justice and regional scientific capacity. Using clear, accessible language, the book introduces readers to nanotechnology and nanomedicine as “invisible fixes”. Written for a broad audience, the book includes an extended “Science Behind the Fixes” section and explores how nanotechnology, when locally rooted and equitably translated, can become a tool for global repair rather than global exclusion. Catalogued by the Library of Congress, *Invisible Fixes* features a foreword by Prof. Twan Lammers of the Department of Nanomedicine and Theranostics at RWTH (*Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule*) Aachen University, Germany.



Epilogue

The remarkable achievements featured in this 6th edition, from the appointment of new professors to the successful defenses of new PhDs, are more than just individual milestones. They are the tangible proof that the BEBUC model works. Every degree earned, every research paper published, and every academic appointment brings us one step closer to our core mission, which is revitalizing Congolese universities with a new generation of young, world-class, ethically driven professors.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our sponsors, partners, and mentors, whose unwavering support has made these success stories possible. Most importantly, we congratulate our scholars worldwide for their resilience, academic rigor, and dedication to the future of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As our network grows and our alumni gradually step into leadership roles within faculties across the country, the vision of BEBUC continues to transform from an ambitious goal into a living reality.

Thank you for your continued support, we look forward to sharing more milestones with you in our next edition.

The BEBUC *Newsletter* 2026 Editorial Board

Eve Loando Kavira

Salomon Kulondwa Metre

Gloire Kasereka Kasitu

The Directory Board of the NGO fUNIKIN and the Panel Members of the BEBUC Scholarship Program

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Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Gerhard Bringmann, Founder and Honorary President

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Virima Mudogo, Founder and Vice-President

Prof. Dr. Karine Ndjoko Ioset, Director and General Manager

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Prof. Dr. Freddy Bangelesa, Deputy for Scholars' Matters

Dr. Hervé Lekuya Monka (newly elected Panel Member), Deputy for Life Science

Mrs. Christine Wolf, Treasurer



From the left: Dr. Hervé Lekuya Monka - Prof. Dr. Hypolite Muhindo Mavoko - Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Gerhard Bringmann - Mrs. Christine Wolf - Prof. Dr. Freddy Bangelesa and Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Alfred Forchel, present during the Annual Members' Assembly (5 June 2026) ; on the inserted pictures: Prof. Dr. Karine Ndjoko Ioset (left) and Prof. Dr. h.c. Virima Mudogo (right), who did not attend the Assembly physically

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