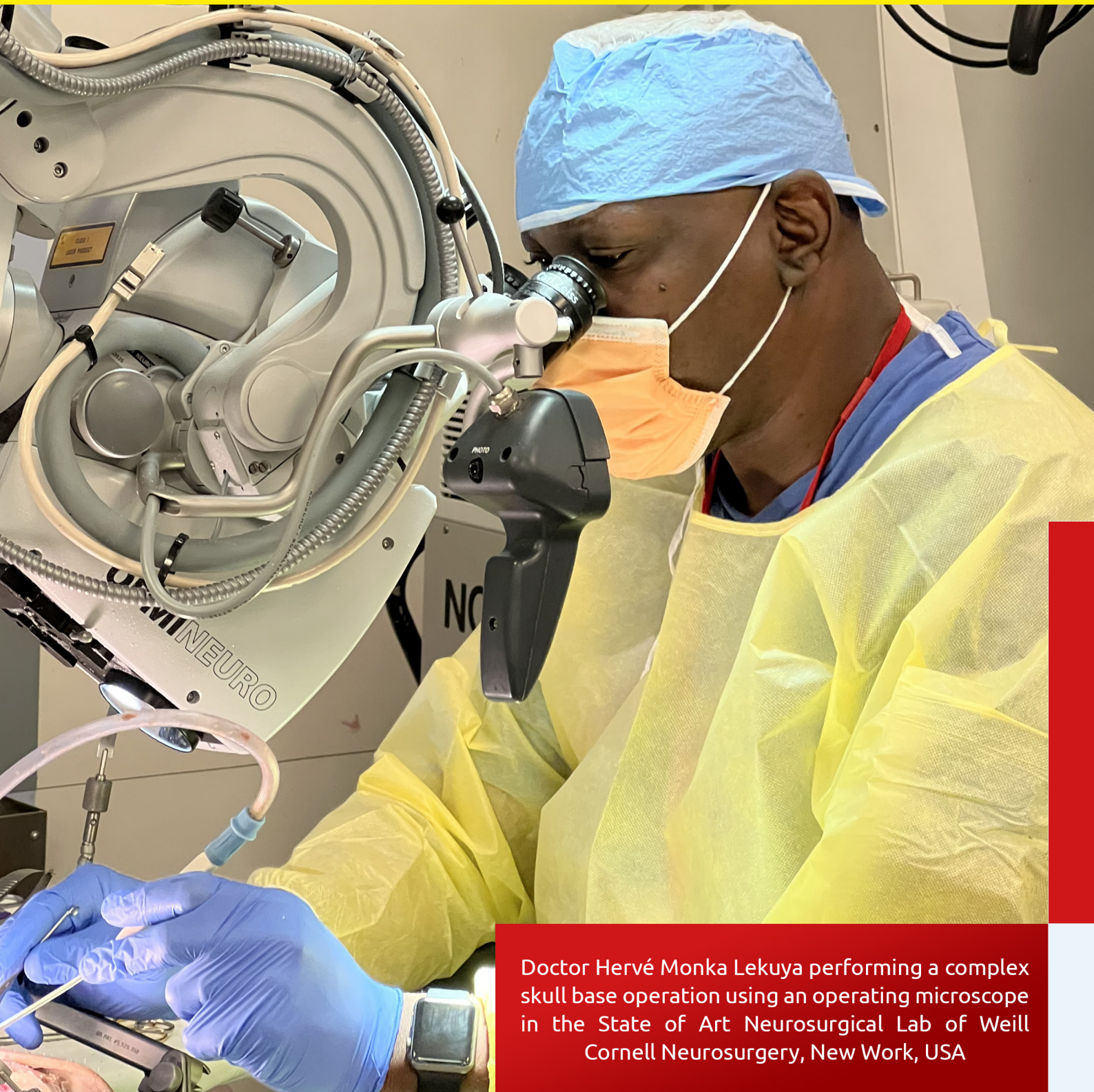


BEBUC

NEWSLETTER 2023



Doctor Hervé Monka Lekuya performing a complex skull base operation using an operating microscope in the State of Art Neurosurgical Lab of Weill Cornell Neurosurgery, New Work, USA

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

BEBUC Newsletter 2023

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Preamble

BEBUC (Bourse d'Excellence Bringmann aux Universités Congolaises) is a unique and particular scholarship program. One of its distinguishing features is that, in addition to providing financial support to its scholars, it offers individualized mentoring to help them 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 studies levels.

Today, BEBUC supports nearly 200 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 in 2022, four BEBUC scholars were appointed as new associate professors at the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN): Prof. Dr. Patient Ciza Hamuli, Prof. Dr. Tania Bishola, Prof. Dr. Aristote Buya Bazenga, and Prof. Dr. Lucien Mushagalusa Kasali.

Outstanding BEBUC scholars distinguish themselves in the Congo and

abroad. To showcase their achievements to the world, the BEBUC Newsletter is published annually. Although not all of the scholars' accomplishments can be recorded in the Newsletter, we select some key achievements, based on several criteria such as the level of relevance, the submission period, and the scope of the Newsletter.

This year's Newsletter even features the appointment of one new full professor, who is also a member of the Panel, along with another new associate professor, both of whom were appointed in 2022. Additionally, we are proud to report that two new BEBUC PhD candidates successfully defended their theses at the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023, respectively.

The Newsletter also includes updates on the progress of our PhD candidates, master's students, BSc holders, and BSc students, as well as details on excursions and local activities organized in some towns.

We hope you enjoy reading the 5th edition of the BEBUC Newsletter!

I. A new BEBUC full professor



Prof. Dr. Hypolite Muhindo Mavoko
PhD

Hypolite Muhindo Mavoko completed his bachelor's degree in Medicine at the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) in 2005. After two years of medical practice, he enrolled in a specialization program in tropical medicine at the same university. From that time on, he was driven by ambition and motivation, dreaming of building an international scientific career in the Congo.

In 2010, when BEBUC launched its first call for tutor applications, Hypolite Muhindo applied and was successful. This marked the beginning of a fruitful journey within BEBUC. He found there an ideal environment to improve his communication and English skills, which later contributed to his brilliant academic success.

In 2013, he was the first BEBUC scholar selected for a PhD scholarship, which included mentorship and funding for books. At that time, he was registered for PhD at the University of Antwerp in Belgium and received a co-funding for his research activities from Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO), Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad - Universitaire Ontwikkelings Samenwerking (VLIR-UOS), European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP), and the Belgian Technical Cooperation - Programme d'Etudes et d'Expertises - in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (BTC).

Hypolite Muhindo was invited several times at

the University of Würzburg to give talks in the frame of the SFB630 network, which was coordinated by Prof. Gerhard Bringmann, who was also a source of inspiration for him.

After the completion of his PhD in Medical Sciences in 2016, he returned to the Congo, with the support of a BEBUC re-entry scholarship.

This scholarship helped him to afford the first difficult months during which a young academic is not yet paid by the Government and therefore the temptation for leaving the country, leading to brain drain, is very high. Upon his return, he started his research activities with the National Malaria Control Program, from where he was identified and selected by the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) in Basel (Switzerland), to undertake consultancies first in a malaria project and then in another project on neglected tropical diseases.

In the latter project, he was a member of the experts' committee responsible, among others, for the selection of PhD candidates based on their profile and the relevance of their research projects. Having been involved for a long time in the fair, transparent, rigorous, and highly competitive evaluation process of BEBUC, Hypolite was equipped to execute successfully this role for the selection of candidates from Central Africa region.

In 2018, he was appointed associate professor and then, in 2022, full professor in the Department of Tropical Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, at UNIKIN. He has recently been elected Head of the same department in March 2023.

Hypolite is a prolific scientist, involved in several research projects, where he collaborates with partners from nearly 20 countries worldwide. He is a principal investigator of several (big) projects on Ebola vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine, malaria in pregnancy, malaria diagnosis, severe malaria in children, etc. These projects are funded by international partners granted after a highly competitive selection process. Currently, he manages grants from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Initiative (CEPI) for two projects, Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) for one project, European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) for three projects, and other projects where he

is involved but not as a team leader, including consultancies and continuous scientific support to the National Malaria Control Program. These projects are established in various locations throughout the Congo, providing free access to healthcare and contributing to the improvement of the quality of care for many Congolese people. Furthermore, these projects have a valuable social aspect regarding the number of employed staff (more than 100 at present).

Of high importance, Hypolite invests himself in the capacity building by supervising PhD students, two of them registered at UNIKIN, six at the University of Antwerp, and one at the University of Amsterdam. He also supervises several master students. Hypolite is very grateful to BEBUC, where his vision flourished, and it therefore constitutes the cornerstone of his current achievements. Following the advice often given by Prof. Bringmann saying “Give your future a structure”, has rewarded him.

II. BEBUC PhD holders



Georges Muhindo Kasay completed his bachelor's degree in Geology in 2015 at the Université Officielle de Ruwenzori (UOR), supported by a BEBUC scholarship. Later, he was awarded a BEBUC master's scholarship and completed his MSc in Geology at the University of Nairobi in 2018.

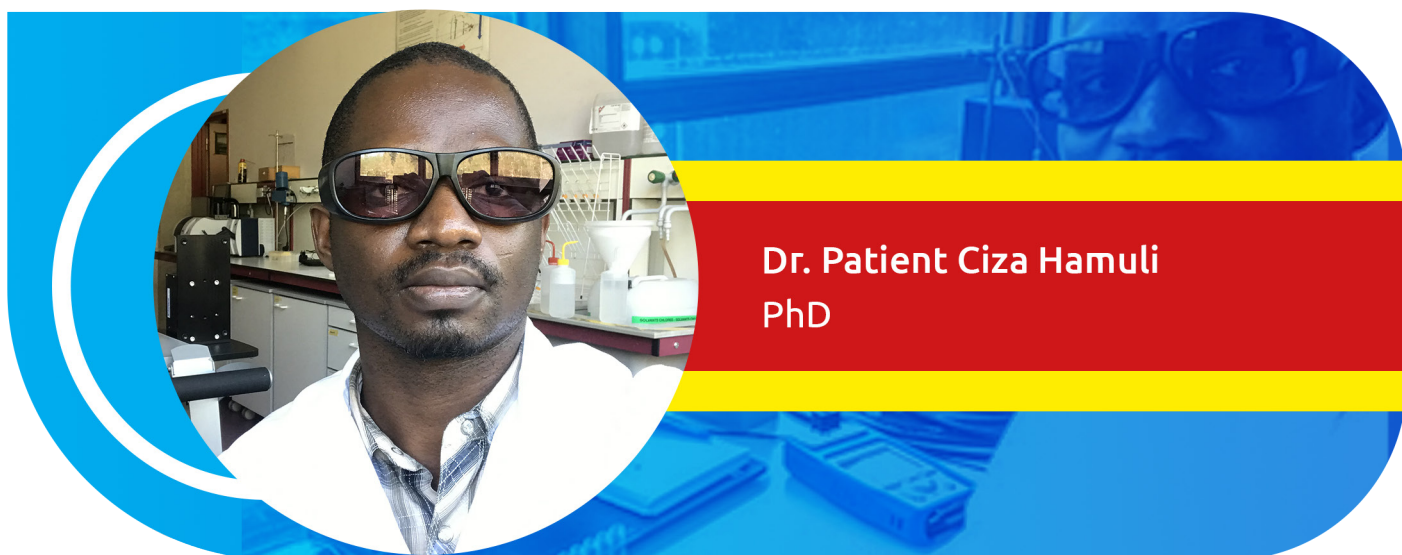
He then obtained an African Union Scholarship for his PhD studies in Geosciences at the Pan African University domiciled at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

He started his PhD in December 2019 and successfully defended his thesis after three years in January 2023. During his PhD studies, he received several grants including the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) research grant, which enabled him achieve access to state-of-the-art laboratory facilities for 6 months at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Georges has published several articles in high-ranking journals, collaborating with international experts in his study area such as Prof. Jochen Kolb, Dr. Benjamin Walter, Prof. Armin Zeh (all three at KIT), Dr. Johannes Giebel (at the Technical University of Berlin), and Dr. Anouk Borst (at KU Leuven and Royal Museum for Central Africa). Georges' PhD research widened his knowledge of microanalytical techniques and their application to understand mineralogical, petrological, and geochemical principles and concepts related to critical metals, especially rare-earth elements (REEs). These elements are currently in high demand for the production of green technology electronic gadgets, permanent magnets for electric vehicles, and wind turbines. The aim of this study was to deter-

mine the place of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and especially the Bingo carbonatite mineralization in contributing to the energy transition of developed economies and climate change solutions. Georges currently works as a lecturer and believes that DRC minerals will provide political and economic stability for Congolese and African people. His plans for the future include teaching and research at the university level (Université de Goma and Université Officielle de Ruwenzori), consulting for BGR (Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe, in English: Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources) and expanding his network through collaborations.

Well done, Georges!



Dr. Patient Ciza Hamuli
PhD

Patient Ciza Hamuli obtained his bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) in 2013. He completed his master's studies at the Karnataka College of Pharmacy affiliated with Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences in India in 2015. His master's project was focused on the «Development, optimization and evaluation of solid lipid nanoparticles (SLN) of temozolomide».

In December 2015, he returned to UNIKIN to start a scientific career as a lecturer in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

In 2016, Patient was awarded a PhD scholarship as part of the ARES-PFS project in Belgium. He pursued his PhD studies in Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Université

de Liège, in the Pharmaceutical Analytical Chemistry Laboratory, under the supervision of Prof. Philippe Hubert and Prof. Roland Marini. His research was aligned with the research topics of the Pharmaceutical Analytical Chemistry Laboratory, focusing on the development of new analytical procedures using chromatography and vibrational spectroscopy, as well as the quality control of medicines to combat substandard and falsified medicines. These topics are relevant to the concerns of university partners in the DRC regarding the quality of pharmaceutical products in the country. His PhD research aimed to develop simple, fast, efficient, and cost-effective analytical methods based on vibrational techniques (near infrared and Raman) using low-cost portable instruments for quality control of medicines in low-income countries.

Throughout his PhD training, he was a member of the CIRM (Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Drugs), which is a multidisciplinary research center bringing together 12 laboratories from two different faculties of the Université de Liège (ULiège).

In 2022, Patient obtained the BEBUC scholarship, a few months following his thesis defense, which took place in February 2022. This scholarship was made possible thanks

to the recommendation of Prof. Gerhard Bringmann. This opportunity in BEBUC allows him to feature in a scientific interdisciplinary environment, a huge boost for young scientists involved in new research perspectives. In the same year, he was appointed associate professor within the Department of Galenic Pharmacy and Drug Analysis at UNIKIN.

Well done, Patient!



Salomé Kahindo Mwanamolo holds a PhD in Agricultural and Environmental Economics from the Université de Bourgogne (Dijon, France). She is currently working at the IESEG (Institut d'Economie Scientifique et de Gestion) School of Management, as a research engineer in the SPECIFICS project, which aims to develop and analyze legume-rich and low pesticide-use farming systems in France.

Since 2013, she has been a BEBUC scholar at the Université Catholique du Gabon (UCG) in Butembo, DRC. In 2016, she completed her bachelor's studies at the same university, where she was appointed teaching assistant in the Faculty of Economics.

Apart from the financial aspect, she benefited from the support of BEBUC in the design of her scientific project. BEBUC helped her to plan each step of her postgraduate studies and provided her with its scientific network to pursue her studies abroad. In 2017, thanks to the

collaboration of Prof. Karine Ndjoko Ioset with Prof. Jean-Marie Boisson, she was admitted in the ECODEVA program at the University of Montpellier (France) for one year of master in environment, energy, and transport economics. That year was not easy for her as she changed the field of research, from financial management, in which she had graduated at UCG to agricultural and environmental economics, but she persevered. At the end of this master's program, she did a 6-month internship in the EcoPub laboratory of the INRAE research center (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment) on climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration in agricultural soils in France.

This internship allowed her to discover the scientific world and to fuel her passion for research. Before the end of her internship, she began showing interest in doing PhD research. She then started applying for PhD grants in France and elsewhere.

After four unsuccessful attempts, her application was finally accepted at the Université de Bourgogne in a 3-year program on the spatial distribution of agricultural activities and environmental services. She was welcomed at AgroSup Dijon in the CESAER laboratory. During her PhD program, she did not only learn to write scientific papers but also to teach at universities. She intervened in some courses of the EGT (Economie et Gouvernance des Territoires) master's program of the Université de Bourgogne and of the undergraduate program of the Université de Caen, Normandie.

The PhD experience turned her life upside down, it was not always easy; she tried several hypotheses which did not succeed, but she did not give up. She understood that she could learn a lot from difficulties. She learned to accept failure, to ask for help from fellow PhD students who were going through the same si-

tuation like her, she learned to deal with stress. At the end of her PhD, she had the opportunity to join the research team of the IESEG School of Management in the SPECIFICS project, thanks to the collaboration of her co-supervisor Prof. Stéphane Blancard. For now, she would like to apply for the position of associate professor at UCG to bring her contribution to teaching in Congolese universities.

She encourages young scholars to believe in their dreams and give themselves the means to make them come true. Life has never been linear; it has ups and downs. The difficulties of life may make you believe that you will never make it, that you are not up to it, but learn that you were created to overcome them. Trust in the capacities that God put in you.

Well done, dear Salomé. Keep shining!

III. BEBUC PhD candidates



Doctor Hervé Monka Lekuya
MD, MMed

Doctor Hervé Monka Lekuya receiving his Neurosurgery's degree by training and examination from the Head of Education of the COSECSA, the Vice President of Namibia, and the President of the COSECSA (not seen on the picture) in Windhoek during the graduation day

Doctor Hervé Monka Lekuya is a neurosurgeon and also a PhD fellow affiliated with the Department of Surgery, College of Health Sciences, Makerere University (Uganda) and the Department of Human Repairs (Neurosurgery), Faculty of Medicine, Ghent University (Belgium).

In 2017, he completed his Master of Medicine (MMed) in Surgery at Makerere University and subsequently underwent a neurosurgical residency under the regional program of the College

of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa (COSECSA) with the joint support of the Duke Global Neurology and Neurosurgery (DGNN) and the World Federation of the Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS) Foundation at Mulago Hospital in Uganda and other satellite WFNS centers. He successfully passed the COSECSA board exams of his neurosurgery clinical fellowship in 2022 in Windhoek, Namibia (see photo).

Hervé completed his undergraduate biomedical studies, medical school, and medical internship with outstanding academic performance at the Université de Kinshasa, DRC in 2012.

In 2018, he was awarded the NuVasive Scholarship for neurosurgical trainees and completed a 3-month clinical observership and research fellowship in Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery and Navigation at Weill Cornell Neurological Surgery in New York City, USA. In 2019, he was recognized as one of the top five young academic surgeons of Africa and was awarded the International Society of Surgery (ISS) Foundation Travel Scholarship Award in Krakow, Poland.

In 2022, he was awarded several competitive research grants, including the Brain Health training NIH neurological diseases research grant at Makerere University, the BOF Mobility Scholarship for doctoral students from Developing Countries between Ghent

University (Belgium) and Makerere University (Uganda), the Duke Global Health Institute Pilot NIH grant in Neurosurgical Research, and the Makerere Research Innovation Fund (Mak-RIF).

In 2023, as part of his Neurosurgery fellowship, he was selected by the Foundation of International Education of Neurosurgery (FIENS-Bassett Fellowship) for a 6-week advanced training of Skull Base and Microneurosurgery at Weill Cornell Neurological Surgery Skull Base 3D Lab in New York City, USA (see cover page photo).

Hervé is actively involved in patients' neurosurgical care, medical education, and clinical research. He has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals and he is an active member of many scientific societies. He has gained extensive international exposure in clinical medicine and research.

Congratulations on your achievements, dear Hervé!



Bienfait Kabuyaya Isamura has been a BEBUC scholar since 2012. He holds a bachelor's degree in Physical Chemistry and Computer Science from the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) and a master's degree in Computational Chemistry from Rhodes University (South Africa).

In February 2023, he was appointed as a teaching and research assistant at UNIKIN. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Theoretical Chemistry at the University of Manchester (United Kingdom), where he is working on the

development of a novel machine-learned force field for biomolecular simulations in solution.

Last year (2022), he completed his master's degree with distinction, achieving an overall score of 94%. In recognition of the quality of his master's research, he was awarded the 2022 S2A3 medal, a national trophy granted annually to the most outstanding research master student at each South African university and university of technology (since 1981).

The greatest merit of his master's research was the successful implementation of the AMADAR software, a python package that allows the prediction of Diels-Alder transition states geometries and the analysis of reaction paths at a large scale. Furthermore, in terms of research output, he contributed to 11 research papers throughout the year, including five first-au-

thored articles in peer-reviewed journals. To acknowledge his outstanding academic and research achievements over the past few years, BEBUC in coalition with the national ministries of Education and Plan (DRC) granted him the Prix d'Excellence Académique certificate.

Well done, dear Bienfait!



Succès has been a BEBUC scholar since 2010. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Geology (Geology and Mining Exploration) in 2014 at the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN). He has been working as a teaching and research assistant in the Department of Geosciences at the Faculty of Sciences, UNIKIN since 2015. His official appointment to the position occurred in February 2023.

From 2016 to 2019, he completed a one-year bachelor's degree followed by a two-year master's degree in Civil and Hydraulic Engineering at the Institut International d'Ingénierie de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (2iE) in Burkina Faso, one of the Centers of Excellence in Africa supported by the World Bank. After his master's degree, he was awarded the Richard R. Ernst Nobel Prize Scholarship for a research internship at the Institute for Groundwater Studies at the University of the Free State in South Africa in 2019.

In December 2020, he was enrolled in a PhD program in Water and Environmental Sciences and Technologies, specializing in Hydrogeology at the Doctoral School of 2iE. His PhD studies are funded by the World Bank through the

African Center of Excellence Project, Impact for Development.

As part of his PhD research, he has been invited to speak at several international conferences including:

- International Doctoral Conference, Sorbonne Développement & la Cité du Développement Durable, Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, Paris, France in April 2021;
- 2nd International Conference on Transboundary Aquifers, International Shared Aquifer Resources Management (ISARM), UNESCO, Paris, France in December 2021;
- «Groundwater: Key to the Sustainable Development Goals», International Conference, Sorbonne University, France in May 2022.

Succès has also represented the 2iE Institute in research activities related to the Groundwater-g Project: «Supporting Groundwater Resources Management in Sub-Saharan Africa Using Low Cost Microgravity Technology» in July 2022 (Kenya) and September 2022 (South Africa). The project is being carried out in collaboration with Queen's University Belfast, the AEON-ESSRI of Nelson Mandela University, the Kenya Water Resources Authority, the University of Aberdeen, and the University of Glasgow.



Lepere Kumba Kwambanda
MSc

Lepere has been a BEBUC scholar since 2016. He holds a bachelor's degree in Law from the Université de Kikwit (UNIKIK) in DRC, and a master's degree in Basic Public Law from the Université de Bordeaux (France)

In 2022, he was promoted to a lectureship position at the Law School of UNIKIK. Meanwhile, he started his second year of PhD and renewed his teaching contract with the Law School of the Université de Bordeaux.

In February 2023, he was selected for the Eugen Ionescu Scholarship of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie for a three-month doctoral research mobility in Romania. He was the only selected candidate to represent the Université de Bordeaux among 100 laureates from 22 countries across the world.

Congratulations, we are proud of you, dear Lepere.

IV. Master students



Arnold Biliki M'penda Alinoti
BSc

Arnold Biliki M'penda has been a BEBUC Scholar since 2012. He holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering obtained in 2017, option: Structural Engineering from the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) with the generous support of the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program. After completing his degree in civil engineering, he decided to acquire some professional and academic experience before pursuing post-gra-

duate studies. Since this choice was not in total adequation with the BEBUC Panel, his scholar status was frozen.

For four years (2018-2022), he worked simultaneously as a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Civil Engineering at the Polytechnic Faculty of UNIKIN, and as a Junior Engineer and then Senior Engineer at ACGT (Agence Congolaise des Grands Travaux).

Considering all the support he had received from BEBUC, he felt deeply indebted and was determined to regain his BEBUC scholar status and become part of this great and precious family once again.

This is the reason why he decided, in 2021, to apply for the MEXT Scholarship of the Japanese Government. After a long process, which started in May 2021 with a pre-selection, a written test in June, an interview in August, and a provisional acceptance by a University in September, he was one of only two Congolese researchers selected by the Japanese Government to benefit from its scholarship, whose benefits include a monthly allowance, as well as education and transportation fees.

After submitting his request for restoration to the Panel, his frozen scholar status was re-installed and he could regain his BEBUC scholar status in April 2022.

He arrived in Japan in May 2022, and after taking Japanese language and culture courses until September 2022, he successfully passed the Graduate School entrance examination and he is currently enrolled in the master's course at Kanazawa University.

He is a member of the Urban, Transportation, and Highway Engineering Laboratory chaired by Prof. Shoichiro Nakayama. His research topic is titled: Design and Sensitivity Analysis of a Unified Land-Use and Transportation

Equilibrium Model with Public Transportation. In this research, Arnold studies the interactions between transport demand, the availability of transport infrastructure (roads and railways), and land use in urban areas. One of the goals of this research is to identify technical policies that can provide a solution to the problem of permanent road congestion in a city with a high population density, like Kinshasa, the capital city of DRC.

Arnold encourages other scholars to consider Japan as an option for postgraduate studies. Japanese people are welcoming and helpful towards foreigners, and life is safe and enjoyable. Japanese universities are modern and very well equipped, and the supervisors are supportive of their students. The only challenge he encountered is that Japanese people remain very attached to their language, even though courses and research can be conducted in English.

In Japan, Arnold learned the values of punctuality, discipline, respect for elders (the so-called Senpai & Sensei principle), and hard work. He hopes to pursue PhD studies after completing his master's degree.

It is an honor and a source of pride for him to be, once again, part of the BEBUC family.



Doctor Marie-Etienne Masesi Lusasi
BSc

Doctor Marie-Etienne Masesi Lusasi has been a BEBUC scholar since 2014. She obtained her bachelor degree of Medicine in 2021 from the Université de Kikwit (UNIKIK) with the support of the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program. She is the first ever female student to obtain more than two distinctions in the Faculty of Medicine at UNIKIK.

Thanks to the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program, she was able to participate in a 3-month internship at Korle-bu Teaching Hospital, in the Surgical Oncology Department,

where she rotated through different subunits including breast, hepato-biliary, and colorectal surgery. During her internship, she participated in all activities organized within the unit, such as consultations, multidisciplinary team meetings, medical staff meetings, and ward rounds. Her stay in Accra was the best remarkable experience for her. She leveraged her experience to prepare for her master's studies, which she has just started at the Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar (Senegal) after leaving Ghana.

Well done, dear Marie Etienne!



Doctor Florent Tshibwid A Zeng
BSc

Florent Tshibwid AZeng has been a BEBUC scholar from the Université de Lubumbashi (UNILU) since March 2013. After completing his bachelor's degree in Medicine in 2018, he received support from BEBUC for his post-graduate training in Pediatric Surgery at the University

Teaching Hospitals in Lusaka, Zambia. In January 2020, Florent started his master's studies in Pediatric Surgery at the Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, Senegal. In November 2020, he was appointed as a Junior Lecturer in the Department of Surgery, at UNILU.

From December 1st to 3rd, 2022, he attended the Second Congress of the Senegalese Society of Pediatric Surgery. The event gathered pediatric surgeons and other medical doctors interested in Pediatric Surgery from Senegal and other west african countries such as Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and the Republic of the Congo. Two main topics were discussed: child trauma and the role of minimally invasive surgery in children.

Among the 95 accepted communications (including both oral presentations and posters), Florent actively contributed to 16 and was awarded the Best Poster Prize, along with his together with colleagues, for their work tit-

led Scapula fracture in a child: report of a rare injury. This injury is considered exceptional in children, with only 70 cases reported worldwide in the English literature by 2021. Florent and his team reported on the clinical features of this rare injury, emphasizing to the importance of performing high-quality imaging to determine the best management approach. They also emphasized that conservative treatment is generally preferred in children, using low-cost materials and resulting in excellent outcomes, as demonstrated in their patient.

We are proud of you, dear Florent!

V. Bachelor's degree holders



Doctor Alix Ntambua Kamina
BSc

Doctor Alix Ntambua has been a BEBUC scholar since 2013. He completed his bachelor's studies in Medicine at the Université Officielle de Mbuji-Mayi (UOM) in July 2019. He went for a 6-month medical internship at the National Institute for Medical Research, Tanga Centre, in Tanzania, where he arrived in May 2022.

He did his internship in Biomedical Laboratory, wherein he rotated through different subunits. After completing his internship, Alix left Tanzania. He plans to start a master's program very soon. He is immensely grateful to BEBUC for this tremendous opportunity.

Well done, dear Alix.



Doctor Constantin Mpoyi Mukeba
BSc

Doctor Constantin Mpoyi Mukeba has been a BEBUC scholar since 2014. He completed his bachelor's studies in Medicine at the Université Officielle de Mbuji-Mayi (UOM) in July 2019, achieving two distinctions.

In February 2022, thanks to the support of the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program, he went for a six-month medical internship at the University Teaching Hospital (Women and Newborn Hospital) in Lusaka, Zambia, where he undertook his internship in Obstetrics and

Gynecology Department. He rotated through different subunits including the cancer disease hospital.

After completing his internship, he returned home. Constantin is currently planning to start a master's program very soon. In November 2022, he was appointed tutor for the BEBUC scholars of Mbuji-Mayi.

Congratulations, dear Constantin!

VI. Bachelor students



Glorieuse Kavira Malikewa (left) receiving the certificate of attendance from Her Excellence Michelle Chen (Acting Deputy Mission Director of United States Agency for International Development)

Glorieuse Kavira Malikewa has been a BEBUC scholar since 2022. She is a third-year student in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Public Health, within the Department of Pharmacy at the Université Officielle de Bukavu (UOB).

In January 2022, she was one of the 90 Young Africans from 14 different East African countries selected among 1,500 young candidates to participate in the YALI (Young African Leaders Initiative) Regional Leadership Center East Africa program, which provides training in civic leadership, public management, and entrepreneurship. The program took place in Nairobi, Kenya, from January 16 to February 10, 2022, after which she received a certificate of attendance as a young leader committed to transforming Africa.

Keep your head up, dear Glorieuse!

VII. Activities of local BEBUC scholars

VII.1. BEBUC Scholars of Bukavu

Two main activities related to BEBUC were organized in Bukavu in 2022:

1. The feedback conference held in September 2022
2. The celebration of the 10th anniversary of BEBUC in Bukavu

VII.1.1. Feedback Conference in Bukavu



From the left: Christian Irengé Ahadi, Séraphin Matumwabirhi Kulimushi, Prof. Félicien Kasali Mushagalusa, Cynthia Fatuma Fataki, Justin Bazibuhe Safari

In September 2022, with the presence of most Bukavu BEBUC scholars holding masters, we, the Bukavu BEBUC family, had a great opportunity to organize a BEBUC conference, which gave them the possibility to share the findings of their master's and PhD researches with the UOB scientific community. In total, we had five speakers who presented:

1) Justin Bazibuhe Safari, a BEBUC scholar since 2013, presented the results of his master's research conducted at Rhodes University in South Africa in the field of Chemistry, specializing in Drug Delivery. The topic of his master's research was titled Development of pH-Sensitive Chitosan-g-poly (Acrylamide-Co-Acrylic Acid) Hydrogel for Controlled Drug Delivery

of Tenofovir Disoproxil Fumarate. He is going to begin his PhD studies at the same university and in the same field very soon. Congratulations, dear Justin! We wish you all the best.

2) Cynthia Fatuma Fataki, a BEBUC scholar since 2015, presented the findings of her master's studies conducted at the Ecole des Mines de Paris in the MIRIS program (Mineral Resources Industries and Society), specializing in Opération minière à ciel ouvert et en souterrain. Her research topic was titled Méthodes comparatives d'estimation des ressources d'un gisement de Cu-Co de type Kupferschiefer. She is currently looking for a PhD opportunity. We wish you all the best for the next steps!

3) Séraphin Matumuabiri Kulimushi, a BEBUC scholar since 2015 and the current tutor of the Bukavu BEBUC scholars, presented the findings of his master research conducted at Nairobi University in Phytopathology. The title of his research work was Potential of *Trichoderma* spp., *Bacillus subtilis*, and *Pseudomonas fluorescens* in the management of early blight in tomato. He is currently seeking a PhD opportunity. Good luck, dear Séraphin!

4) Christian Irengé Ahadi, a BEBUC scholar since 2013, presented the findings of his master's research performed at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Université de Liège in the area of Gestion des Risques Sanitaires (GRIS). The topic of his research work was Les niveaux de responsabilités politiques et individuelles dans la riposte à la COVID-19 à Atakora au Bénin. He plans to start his PhD studies soon. Good luck, dear Christian!

In addition, the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Public Health of the Université Officielle de Bukavu (UOB), Prof. Félicien Kasali Mushagalusa, was the

guest speaker. He is currently a BEBUC re-entry scholar since October 2022. He took this opportunity to share the results of his PhD research conducted at Mbarara University in Uganda, which focused on Antidiabetic Medicinal Plants Used in Democratic Republic of Congo: A Critical Review of Ethnopharmacology and Bioactivity Data.

He is now looking for a postdoctoral opportunity.

We wish you all the best! In summary, the conference held in September 2022 in Bukavu provided an excellent opportunity for BEBUC scholars to share their research findings with the scientific community at the Université Officielle de Bukavu. The event was held at the Karhale Campus of UOB and was attended by many lecturers and students. The local scientific community learned about the knowledge acquired by BEBUC scholars abroad, and the attendees received flyers and conference block-notes containing all the necessary details about the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program. Overall, the attendees expressed their great satisfaction with the organization of the conference.

VII.1.2. Celebration of the 10th anniversary of BEBUC in Bukavu



From the left: Richard Amba Nasima, Séraphin Matumwabirhi Kulimushi, Noa Agisha Mukanire, Christian Irengé Ahadi, Grâce Berorwoth Biwaga, Christophe Ajuamungu Hamuli, Lydia Balekage Akonkwa, Kein Kalume Kamwanga, Glorieuse Kavira Malikewa, Junior Ashuza Mungu and Justin Bazibuhe Safari

BEBUC was implemented in Bukavu in 2012. The year 2022 was the 10th anniversary of BEBUC in Bukavu. To commemorate this event, a special seminar was organized on September 3rd, 2022, where scholars shared their experiences in the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program. Christian Irengé Ahadi, one of the first BEBUC

scholars in Bukavu presented the history of BEBUC there, recalling some key events such as evaluations, joint seminars, and women seminars held since 2012.

We wish a long life to the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program!

VII.2. BEBUC Scholars of Butembo International Women's Day Conference



From the left: Sarah Kavira Lwayivweka, Annette Kavugho Kasambo, Wasingya Yvette Mukirania, Eve Kavira Loando, Laurène Heri Wangivirwa, Adèle Kavira Musingania, Vivuya Daniella Ndove, Musavuli Gratia Kalindwe

Regarding the International Women's Day theme for 2023, the women of the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program in Butembo organized a conference on Saturday, March 11th, 2023, especially for students of Butembo, with a focus on women. The topic of the conference was *Digital Education for Peace*. There were two presentations: the first, titled *Cyberviolence and Rational Usage of Internet* was given by Mr. Richard Taghembwa, a senior lecturer and researcher in Information and Communication

Sciences at the Université de l'Assomption au Congo (UAC) in Butembo. The second presentation, titled *Personal Branding*, was given by Ms. Eve Kavira Loando, the Main Speaker of BEBUC Butembo and a student at the Université Catholique du Graben (UCG) in Butembo. Additionally, Dr. Dieumerici Kaseso, the Tutor of the BEBUC scholars of Butembo, gave a presentation on the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program.

The objectives were to sensitize and inform students, especially women, about the rational usage of the internet; to raise awareness of cyberviolence and provide strategies to combat it; to help students build a safe e-image and identity; and to present BEBUC to new students and encourage their participation in future activities.

During the conference, *Cyberviolence* was presented as a growing multifaceted problem in modern society and was defined *as the use of online digital devices or services to engage in activities that result in physical, psychological, emotional self-harm or cause harm to another person*. Mr. Richard Taghembwa proposed several ways to combat cyberviolence, including reporting malwares, inappropriate content, identifying the actors involved, and informing the site editors or media outlets, to withdraw inappropriate content.

The second orator, Ms. Eve Kavira Loando, discussed “Personal Branding” and defined it as “the conscious and intentional effort to create and influence public perception of an individual or the process of defining and promoting what you stand for as an individual”. She provided some strategies to build a positive e-image or brand, among which discovering oneself by listing achievements and qualities, taking care of your story telling by writing blogs, opinion pieces, and branded images for social media, updating profile data, and being consistent and focused on quality while caring about online security.

After the two presentations of the day, Doctor Dieumerici Kaseso, Tutor of BEBUC scholars of Butembo, presented BEBUC and introduced the concept of open BEBUC seminars in Butembo. He gave a brief history of BEBUC, which began in 2008 by initially supporting four students from UNIKIN by Prof. Bringmann and Prof. Mudogo personally, followed by the efforts and endeavors of the whole BEBUC Panel.

He emphasised that, thanks to the culture of excellence and to the support of donors and all the members of the NGO FUNIKIN, BEBUC has grown over 15 years and has nearly 200 scholars (almost 40% women) and has «produced» 19 professors. He encouraged students and participants to join BEBUC and to support it. Inspired by Prof. Bringmann, he introduced the concept of open BEBUC seminars in Butembo.

During the conference, many questions were asked by the assembly of participants, some related to the presentations and others to BEBUC. The conference gathered 159 participants, among them 149 students and ten lecturers and academic authorities. Artistic presentations were held by students of MCH (Motivons la Conscience Humaine) Talent, including Ms. Laurène Heri Wangivirwa, a BEBUC scholar of Butembo. They performed poems and slams related to women’s rights.

Overall, the event was a great success for all the participants, partners, and for BEBUC.

Well done, dear BEBUC Butembo!

VII.3. BEBUC Mbuji-Mayi



From the left: Eric Athanase Kangudia, Jean-Luc Cipela Kabipangi, Esther Ngoya Cimanga, Hervé Mbuyamba Tshikomba, Carole Nsonga Kanyinda, Felly Nzengu Nzengu, Constantin Mukeba Mpoyi

On September 9th, 2022, a group of seven BEBUC scholars from Mbuji-Mayi embarked on an excursion in Nzaba, a region located at 86 km west of Mbuji-Mayi. During the trip, Carole Nsonga Kanyinda, a fourth-year bachelor student in Medicine, delivered a presentation on the importance of environmental conservation. After visiting some natural sites, the scholars also went to the Samuel Mutombo Institute of Science and Entrepreneurship, where they inte-

racted with secondary school pupils and shared information about the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program. This was a pleasant and enjoyable experience for the scholars.

We express our deepest gratitude to the BEBUC Panel for providing scholars with such opportunities for their personal growth and entertainment!

VIII. The Prime Speaker's Cabinet

The BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program is committed to promote democracy and exemplary leadership among all of its scholars. At the local level, all BEBUC scholars in various towns or institutions elect their representatives called Speakers, along with Vice-Speakers, who then gather in the Speakers' Council. The Prime

Speaker assisted by two Vice-Prime Speakers, all of them elected by the Speakers and Vice-Speakers, preside the Speakers' Council. The Prime Speaker nominates other qualified and experienced BEBUC scholars to complete the constitution of the full Cabinet.

Here is the composition of the current Prime Speaker's Cabinet:

Prime Speaker:	Japhet Kasereka Mapati
First Vice-Prime Speaker:	Mwanack Kakule Matina
Second Vice-Prime Speaker:	Patient Kubuya Binwa
Secretary:	Hervé Mbuyamba Tshikomba
Reporter:	Elisée Ntambua Mbombo
Advisor:	Florent Tshibwid A Zeng

IX. The New Directory Board of the NGO *f*UNIKIN and the Panel Members of the BEBUC Excellence Scholarship Program

Prof. Alfred Forchel (President)
Prof. Ulrike Holzgrabe (Vice-President)
Prof. Virima Mudogo (Vice-President)
Prof. Karine Ndjoko Ioset (Director and General Manager)
Prof. Hypolite Muhindo Mavoko (Secretary for Public Relations)
Mrs. Christine Wolf (Treasurer)
Prof. Gerhard Bringmann (Honorary President)



From the left: Dr. A. Zillenbiller (BEBUC Secretary), Dr. C. Waldhorn, Prof. G. Bringmann, Prof. U. Holzgrabe*, C. Wolf*, Prof. K. Ndjoko*, Prof. H. Mavoko*, K. Sauer, Prof. M. Kleinhans, A. Schütz, and D. Ngusu during the Annual Members' Assembly (May 26, 2023); on the inserted pictures: Prof. A. Forchel* (left) and Prof. V. Mudogo* (right), who did not attend the Assembly physically [* = Panel Member]*



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