



INSTITUT MEDICAL CHRETIEN DU KASAI

Christian Medical Institute of the Kasai - Serving in Central Congo

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A Monthly or Bimonthly Newsletter

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First Class of Graduates from the New IMCK College:

With pomp and joy on July 30, 2013, fifteen students graduated from the Institut Supérieur Des Techniques Médicales (ISTM). Eleven men & women graduated with a



L to R: Bijoux Mbuyi, Jacques Mpoi, Maitre Albert Nkashama - Academic Authorities

degree in Health Administration & five graduated with a Nursing Science Degree in Midwifery. Marcia Murray, one of two Americans volunteering for IMCK, writes that for graduation, the large IMCK dining room was transformed with seating in every space, with a stage, and with paper garlands & balloons hung from the ceiling. A brass band welcomed arriving family, guests, IMCK staff, and local chiefs. The procession began with graduates, then ISTM staff and academic authorities, special guests, the Mayor of Kananga, the Provincial Minister of Education, the President of the Provincial Assembly of West Kasai, and the Vice Governor. Reporters and cameramen attended.

The program began with prayer and the national anthem. Academic Dean, Jacques Mpoi, delivered a speech about the academic performances of the students. Maitre Albert Nkashama, Chairman of the ISTM Hospital Administration Dept., and Madame Bijoux Mbuyi, Chairman of the Nursing Sciences Dept., presented the graduates. After

diplomas were awarded, a representative of the graduates, Marlene Kabeya Malenga, gave a speech. The ISTM Director General Alexis Mayamba Nzamba (Cont'd on page 2 - Graduation.)



Midwifery Graduates receive their diplomas.

New partnership for IMCK, as medical students arrive for a year of work:

IMCK recently partnered with Congo Protestant University (UPC) Medical School in Kinshasa (www.upcongo.org) to have medical students work at IMCK. Dr. Samuel Mampunza, Dean of the Medical School, escorted 14 UPC last-year medical students to Tshikaji (IMCK) in July. These eight women & six men began a year-long rotation to gain clinical, diagnostic, & patient care skills to become medical doctors. The UPC Med School was launched in 2006. It has an 8 year program, with year one devoted to high school level sciences, since many high schools do not provide a good science foundation. The UPC Med School now has more than 1,000 students & has been recognized by a Japanese audit team as the number 2 medical school in Congo.

The students are living in one wing of the Good Shepherd Hospital. Two large rooms and restrooms have been remodeled for the men and the women at UPC expense with \$7,000 hand delivered to IMCK during June by Jimmy Shafe, Chair of the North American Liaison Bureau for UPC. Their initial adjustment was difficult, as the students are in crowded living space and bathrooms, and with no stipend for food or incidentals. These are matters on which IMCK is working. UPC is in the process of receiving a container of medical equipment and supplies to assist three hospitals that are partnering to train UPC medical students. Jimmy Shafe writes, "As of this moment, we are not certain what equipment will make its way to Tshikaji, but UPC is committed to an on-going partnership and encouraging our students to serve in rural Congo."

Dr Pepe Banza Kalenga, Medical Dir. of Education at IMCK, writes that the students are rotating through surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics & OB/GYN. Dr Leon Mubikayi recently visited IMCK to present seminars to the students regarding gynecologic fistula repairs, breast cancer & prevention/treatment of sepsis. Speaking of new French medical textbooks donated by ROW and Parkville Presbyterian Church of Parkville, MO, Dr Kalenga says, "I will do everything to make these new books available to all, so [IMCK] recreates an atmosphere of excellent work." He thanked all who have coordinated this new partnership & also said, "The contribution of new students to the operation of [the Good Shepherd Hospital & PAX] is considered significant & is crucial during the night guards."

Reporting on recent travel regarding this program, Bernard Kabibu writes, "Alexis Mayambi, Dir. of IMCK, & I just completed a trip to Bas Congo to visit the Evangelical Medical Institute Kimpese (EMI) & to Vanga Hospital. IMCK, EMI & Vanga Hospitals received the first trainee doctors from Protestant University of Congo. The purpose of this trip was to collaborate with our sister institutions on the supervision of doctors in training, so there is no large difference in the (Cont'd pg 3 - Med)



Celestin Katombe coordinates the Infectious Disease Clinic at PAX and speaks here to a person who is HIV / AIDS positive.

HIV/AIDS Work: Do you know how to help apply for a grant to prevent HIV/AIDS or to diagnose and treat people with HIV/AIDS? IMCK needs help in securing funding to boost their work in HIV/AIDS. For years, Celestin Katombe, has been the nurse coordinating the clinic for infectious diseases at PAX. He began his nursing career in 1985 and came to work at PAX in 1997. He has had special training in infectious diseases, such as AIDS, TB, sexually transmitted diseases, and malaria. Dr Pepe Banza Kalenga, the Medical Director of Education at IMCK, also has special training in the management of people diagnosed with AIDS. Dr Kalenga writes that IMCK, in an effort to reduce mother to baby transmission, has a program to test pregnant women for AIDS/HIV. Men and women come to the clinic for counseling regarding infectious diseases, for testing, and for treatment.

Dr Kalenga writes that the IMCK program lacks a strong psychosocial program and judicial support, and needs better computer facilitation to test for CD4 counts. (CD4 measures the immune level of an infected person.) Dr Kalenga and Celestin Katombe say a grant could address the above needs as well as the following: better supply of antivirals and ways to administer medicines, nutritional education programs, and a program to empower the community in ways to care for orphans. If you or a person you know can assist in writing a grant to procure funding for AIDS/HIV programs, please contact Charlotte White at CRUleWhite@gmail.com or Larry Sthreshley at Larry@sthreshley.org. Submitted by Charlotte White

Cont'd - Graduation: delivered a speech about the past, present and future of ISTM. The Vice Governor congratulated the graduates and presented gifts to the valedictorians. A celebratory reception followed the graduation ceremony. Submitted by Marcia Murray.



Some of the graduates of health administration.

Thanks to all, who have given to the IMCK Endowment, which is now up to \$172,818! More about that program in the next newsletter!

This account about HIV/AIDS is taken from the blog of Bob and Kristi Rice at <http://bobandkristi.blogspot.com>:

Diakaja - "At 9 am every Saturday morning, 20 to 30 women and men gather at Tatu Charles' home in Nganza Commune. They began gathering together in 2007. They are different ages, but most are women. They do different types of work, but many of them farm. They worship in different churches. Despite these differences, they all share one thing in common. Each member of this group has HIV/AIDS. They originally began meeting to remind each other to take their anti-retroviral drugs. They also began coming together for mutual encouragement. People living with AIDS are often misunderstood. Many people in Congo believe that persons with AIDS practice witchcraft. Those afflicted with AIDS often live in shame, unwilling to expose their sickness. Yet this group is different. They do not live in shame. They are open about their malady. They want others to know that AIDS exists, and that it kills. They reach out to others who are living in darkness and fear. This group of courageous women and men have given their group a name - "**Diakaja,**" which means the act of transforming something bad into something good.

Pastor Albert Kabue Muela finished his doctoral studies last year in Kinshasa [and recently] returned to Kananga. Through a former classmate..., he was introduced to Diakaja. Pastor Kabue expressed his interest in meeting with them and doing a Bible study. Pastor Kabue, usually paying his own way, travels by 'moto taxi' every Saturday morning to be with this group of AIDS patients. With warmth, humor, humility and love, he leads them through a Bible study. Each member actively participates in the study and feels affirmed.

Three weeks ago I had the privilege of joining Pastor Kabue to visit Diakaja. ... We sat together with Diakaja members in a large circle under a tree. Tatu Charles, President of Diakaja, described how the meeting would commence and gave a few announcements. Each person introduced themselves. Pastor Kabue was then asked to pray and lead us in the study. That morning we studied Psalm 23. ... He or I would read one or two verses at a time, allowing members of the group to ask questions and provide comments. Pastor Kabue facilitated the study with grace and patience. He gave wonderful insights to supplement what was shared by group members.

The passage came to life for group members as we reflected on the role of a shepherd caring for his sheep, and how God tenderly and watchfully cares for us, His children. ... Verse four reads, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me." After reading these verses, Charles said "This verse is *for us*. As AIDS patients we are walking through the valley of the shadow of death. We don't know when death will come, but it is ever present for us." Everyone in the group resonated with Charles' comment. Later they shared the many challenges they face: work despite physical weakness, paying school fees for their children, and paying for drugs to repress sickness. Despite these challenges, members of Diakaja exuded a quiet confidence that God is with them as they travel through this valley.

Psalm 23 reminds us all that God is indeed with us, even through the darkest valley. May God bless the Diakaja group, and Pastor Kabue as he seeks to encourage and comfort those afflicted by HIV/AIDS." Written May 20, 2012 by Bob Rice



Above L to R: Antonio Martinez, Fay Grasty and Mike Clement. Antonio, at the airport, as he departs for Congo. Fay and Mike, members of Myers Park Presbyterian Church, say good by.

Volunteer work for IMCK: Antonio Martinez, an architect who is volunteering his work for IMCK, has arrived in Kananga & will live there for at least a year. He is living in a room at PAX currently, as he works on renovation of that large downtown facility. Myers Park Presbyterian Church is helping to support him. He writes that the solar panel systems for PAX arrive this month and that they are critical, since PAX can no longer depend on city electricity. And gas for the current generator system is very expensive. Phase one of PAX renovation, the laboratory, is in progress and to be completed by November. This first phase is funded by PCUSA. Antonio is completing drawings for phase two, which is renovation of the dental clinic. While PAX is his priority project, Antonio is also working on the designs for four new buildings for the new IMCK College, ISTM, out at Tshikaji; this is to be completed in order to apply for an ASHA grant (American Schools and Hospitals Abroad.) Submitted by Jo Stewart and Charlotte White

Med Students Cont'd: practical training of young doctors, & also to exchange different management systems. This trip was sponsored by ROW & (UPC), whom we thank. We had rich exchanges. We learned from them & they learned from us. Please know that the UPC, IMCK, EMI & Vanga have become partners in the education of physicians, & that these medical institutions will become university hospital institutions in the near future." Submitted by Bernard Kabibu, Jimmy Shafe, & Dr Kalenga

The IMCK website is a great resource. Go to www.IMCK.org or type it into your browser. Write FriendsofIMCK@gmail.com, if you want to advise or help us with this newsletter or any other projects in partnership with IMCK service.

Keep up with USA/Congo Partnerships & News:

www.imck.org & <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/global/democratic-republic-congo/> & www.mbfoundation.org & <http://www.congopartners.org/> and www.facebook.com/ (search IMCK Congo) and <http://congohelpinghands.org/> & <http://www.row.org/congo-kasai-2009-update/>. IMCK, PCUSA and MBF sites have lots of information about Congo and IMCK. Learn about the Congo Mission Network meeting, the next groups going to Congo, Helping Hands work, ROW work. To join Congo Connections, write Annette anwash@centurylink.net. Go to <http://www.enoughproject.org/> to learn about conflict minerals in Congo and the need for certification. Learn about Congo at www.wikipedia.org/. Read, learn, get involved.

Board Members of IMCK at the April 2013 meeting:

- Dr. Larry Sthreshley - PCUSA Rep; Chairman of Board
 - Mr. Jeff Boyd - PCUSA Representative
 - Dr. Mulumba Edmond - State Medical Inspector
 - Rev. Birakara Ilowa - CMCO Representative (Mennonite)
 - Mr. Tshishimbi Kasonga -CMCO Representative
 - Mr. Laurent Kamizelo Kianza - CMCO Representative
 - Rev. Tshidinda Mamba - CPC Representative
 - Rev. Dr. Mulumba Musumbu Mukundi- CPC Rep.
 - Ms. Josephine Stewart- PCUSA Representative
 - Dr. Patrick Kebeya Tshibemba - CPC Representative
 - Mr. Ntumba Tshitenge- CPC Representative
 - Rev. Mboyamba Kabala- IMCK Representative
 - Mr. Alexis Myamba Nzamba - IMCK Representative
- Current IMCK Administration:** imckbusiness54@yahoo.fr
IMCK Director - Mr. Alexis Mayambi Zambia
Administrator - Mr. Bernard Kabibu Bimvulu

IMCK is a Christian primary health care facility and medical education center. Its services are centered at the Good Shepherd Hospital, a 140 bed facility, and at PAX, with 20 beds. General medicine, surgery, ophthalmology, pediatrics, gyn/obstetrics, dental services, radiology and lab services are provided. This faith based organization has been in operation for almost 60 years.

How to make a donation to IMCK:

To give to **IMCK endowment**, go to <https://mbfoundation.secure-donor.com/fimck?> & follow the directions. Or write a check to Friends of IMCK & write For Endowment. Send to Medical Benevolence Foundation, PO Box 96877, Washington, DC 20090. (Friends of IMCK is part of MBF.)

To give through the **Medical Benevolence Foundation**, a validated mission support group of PCUSA, go to <http://www.mbfoundation.org/index.php>. Designate on line "For IMCK Congo." Or send a check to Medical Benevolence Foundation, PO Box 96877, Washington, DC 2009. Write IMCK, Congo on the memo line.

To give **directly to IMCK**, make check to IMCK. Send to Wells Fargo Bank (www.wellsfargo.com): Account number: 2000008628398; Account Owner: Institut Medical Chretien du Kasai. Send an email to Bernard Kabibu at IMCK (above address) informing him of the amount and designation, so IMCK can manage it appropriately and also so they can acknowledge the gift.

To give through **Presbyterian Church, USA** (PCUSA), go to <http://gamc.pcusa.org/give/E320202/>. Or write a check to Presbyterian Church USA; send to PCUSA, Individual Remittance Processing, PO Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Put "ECO#320202 - IMCK" on the check.

To give through **Rivers of the World-Kasai Chapter**, make checks payable to ROW & write FOR IMCK. Send to 3640 Hewatt Court, Snellville, GA 30039. Or go to www.row.org & donate. Follow instructions to designate the gift to Congo-Kasai / IMCK. Give in honor of someone, if desired.

Newsletter Matters: Contributors this month: Bernard Kabibu, Banza Kalenga, Marcia Murray, Bob Rice, Jimmy Shafe, Jo Stewart, Charlotte White. To add or remove a name from the mailing list, write Charlotte White at CRuleWhite@gmail.com. She welcomes your suggestions or