



# THE HEART OF PARTNERSHIP



**KORLE-BU  
NEUROSCIENCE  
FOUNDATION**

2023 Annual Report





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# CHOOSING TO DO SOMETHING IS EVERYTHING

**KBNF IS BUILDING AN INTERNATIONAL FAMILY—A FAMILY OF CHAMPIONS—FROM MANY WALKS OF LIFE, ACROSS THE WORLD. I AM OFTEN APPROACHED BY PEOPLE, EXPRESSING A DESIRE TO JOIN WITH US, BUT WHO BELIEVE THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLS.**

**THEY ASK ME, “AM I QUALIFIED?” MY RESPONSE IS: “DO YOU LOVE TO SERVE?”**

**WE ARE BUILDING** a family of champions, gathering people together who love to serve. One of our core values that underlines the work of the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation (KBNF) is Heart Power. Heart Power is caring with your heart, caring with compassion. It directs us daily in our mission and our vision. In 2023, we rose to meet many challenges, but we didn’t do it alone.

One example is the story of one operating room table. In 2023, we received word of an OR table that would be donated, but it was in need of some repair. When we contacted the manufacturer, Meditek, in Eastern Canada, they agreed to repair it for free—a first! Then Diamond Delivery arranged transport across Canada and back—another first. The OR table was repaired, refurbished and

returned to our Surrey warehouse in pristine condition. One of our volunteer carpenters then carefully built a crate for it, so it could safely be loaded onto a container by our team of volunteers. Finally, it was shipped to The Gambia to serve in the neurosurgical ward.

Delivering one OR table in pristine condition to our partners in The Gambia required heart-powered decisions by many partners along the way.

There’s a quote by Edward Everett Hale (Helen Keller’s cousin) that I’ve adapted and often share to underline the work of KBNF:

*I am only one, but still I **am** one, I cannot do everything, but I can do **something**, and I will **choose** to do the something that I can do.*

**Everyone can do something, but it’s definitely a choice.** KBNF makes choices every day. Together, as an international family, we deliver on those choices. We are nurturing hope, confidence, and the possibility that dreams, both near and abroad, may just become a reality.

I encourage you to join our family, as together, we embrace being vibrant members of a living and vital partnership. We invite you to do the something that only you can do.



**Marj Ratel**, Founder, President  
Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation

# CHAMPIONS

people who love to serve. We are building a family of people who love to serve. We are building a family of people who love to serve. We are building a family of



**KORLE-BU NEUROSCIENCE FOUNDATION WORKS WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND LOCAL PARTNERS TO DEVELOP NEUROSCIENCE CARE IN WEST AFRICA.**

We provide medical supplies, services, and training that would otherwise be unavailable.



**OUR PURPOSE** is to enhance the delivery and quality of healthcare in West Africa.

**OUR FOCUS** is to develop fully equipped, staffed, and self-sustaining neuroscience programs and facilities.

218

NEW VOLUNTEERS  
IN CANADA

43

DISTRIBUTIONS OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES  
AND EQUIPMENT IN LIBERIA

18,305

PIECES OF EQUIPMENT AND BOXES  
OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES



# OUR WORK IS IN 3 CORE AREAS



## SHIPPING

**WE PARTNER WITH** local governments, NGO’s and hospitals to supply and distribute critically-needed medical equipment and supplies to hospitals and clinics in West Africa.

## MISSIONS

**OUR SPECIALIZED TEAMS,** including neurosurgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, occupational therapists and biomedical engineers collaborate with local medical professionals to perform essential brain and spine surgeries.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING



**SIDE-BY-SIDE MENTORSHIP** involves health care professionals working and learning together, from the operating room to bedside nursing and rehabilitation.



**HORIZONTAL COLLABORATION** fosters supportive relationships among healthcare professionals in West Africa, creating a network of mutual assistance.



**VERTICAL COLLABORATION** connects established neurosurgeons and centers with frontline healthcare providers in West Africa, providing advanced support on clinical cases and operations throughout the year.



# WHERE WE WORK

## SIERRA LEONE

**IN A COUNTRY** with no neurosurgeons, we support the healthcare system with supplies, collaborating with doctors to remotely support neurosurgery cases and explore ways to build partnerships in Sierra Leone to help launch neurosurgery across the country in the future.

## THE GAMBIA

**GAMBIAN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS** are becoming an integrated part of our surgical training and missions in the region. In 2023, we shipped our first container to The Gambia, supporting this nation’s sole neurosurgeon.

## LIBERIA

**HOME TO OUR** distribution warehouse, we conducted 43 distributions of medical supplies and equipment to hospitals and clinics across the country. Liberia is also our hub for training and surgical missions, in collaboration with Liberia’s Ministry of Health.

## GHANA

**WE WORK IN** close collaboration with medical professionals in Ghana, supporting neurological access across the region through mentorship and participation on surgical missions. In 2023, we shipped four containers to the nation.

## NIGERIA

**NIGERIA HAS ONE** of West Africa’s most advanced neurosurgery programs and is committed to helping us develop neurosurgical capacity across the region. Recently, doctors and nurses received training to use an ultrasound machine gifted by KBNF.







Dr. Alvin Nah Doe  
Liberia

Dr. Femi Bankole  
Nigeria

Dr. Harry Akoto  
Ghana

Dr. John Jabang  
The Gambia

Marj Ratel, Founder, President  
Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation  
on the Heart of Partnership

**UNTIL 2017, THERE WERE NO  
PRACTICING NEUROSURGEONS  
RESIDING IN LIBERIA. NOW  
THERE ARE TWO. IT'S A STORY  
OF PARTNERSHIP, COURAGE AND  
COMMITMENT AND KBNF IS AT  
THE HEART OF IT.**

**PARTNERSHIP**



# NEUROSURGERY IN LIBERIA: A STORY OF PARTNERSHIP

IN 2016, KBNF President Marj Ratel met Dr. Alvin Nah Doe in person for the first time during a KBNF neurosurgical mission in Tappita, Liberia. At the time, Dr. Doe was doing his neurosurgical residency in Senegal, but he had no plans to return to Liberia to practice neurosurgery. He was concerned he wouldn't be able to practice neurosurgery due to a lack of equipment, tools, resources and support.

"We will help you," Marj told Alvin. "We will be here for you, and we will provide you with what you need to be a neurosurgeon." She added: "I give you my word."

It was more than a commitment to Alvin, however. Marj's commitment to helping start neurosurgery in Liberia began years earlier, when she received a phone call from Dr. Estrada Bernard, a neurosurgeon in Anchorage, Alaska, and the nephew of Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2006-2018.)

He phoned me out of the blue, Marj remembered, after finding KBNF on the Internet. After intro-ducing himself and telling her who his aunt was, Dr. Bernard said, Would you go to Liberia and consider building neurosurgery there?

At the time, Marj and a multinational team were already planning on a

trip through West Africa. They added Liberia to the list, with the provision that Pres. Johnson Sirleaf would graciously provide accommodation for the team.

"We were her guests on her compound in Liberia," Marj remembered. "They provided us with beautiful meals, and I mean they just really took care of us." So, in November 2011, Marj and the team of 15 people evaluated the John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital at the time as a potential place to start neurosurgery. "When we were concluding, the President joined us with her family and we had a meal together. And then she said to me, "Marj, would you consider building neurosurgery in Liberia?"



"We will," Marj responded, "but you're not ready yet." Liberia needed the radiological support of a CT scanner in order for KBNF to help build neurosurgery. For Marj, that was non-negotiable.

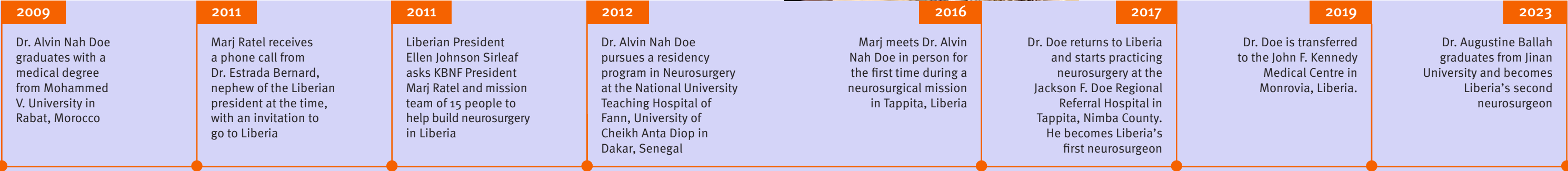
Pres. Johnson Sirleaf agreed and made sure Liberia obtained a CT scanner. In 2014, a KBNF team conducted the first neurosurgical mission at the Jackson F. Doe Regional Referral Hospital in Tappita, Nimba County.

A KBNF team returned in 2016 and that mission became another key moment in the story of neurosurgery in Liberia. Marj stayed in communication with Alvin and remained firm in

KBNF's commitment. KBNF has not let Dr. Doe down.

"From 2017 up to now, everything is provided by KBNF for neurosurgery," says Dr. Nah Doe. "Seriously, even the sutures." "Thank God I met KBNF, because KBNF continues to do a lot for us."

There is much room for growth. "My country, Liberia, needs a true change and I strongly believe that we Liberians have to be part of it," says Dr. Doe. "As much as we need partners, we also need to be at the forefront of these changes. So, inasmuch as KBNF is doing everything, we ourselves, we need to do something as well."







Rose Woller, Executive Director  
Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation  
on the Effect of Partnership

**BY JOINING FORCES, WE ARE  
ABLE TO MAKE A LARGER  
IMPACT THAN BY WORKING  
BY OURSELVES.**

**ACQUISITION &  
DISTRIBUTION**



# HOW KBNF SENT 500 HOSPITAL BEDS TO WEST AFRICA

## STARTING IN NOVEMBER 2023, KBNF BEGAN SHIPPING 500 HOSPITAL BEDS TO WEST AFRICA.

WHEN VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH approached Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation in the summer of 2023 with the offer of a larger number of decommissioned hospital beds, we jumped at the opportunity.

“One of our four pillars in Vancouver Coastal Health is planetary health and we found ourselves in this project with over a thousand beds available and we wanted to repurpose them to allow for the continuity of patient care elsewhere,” said Jonathan Freund, Procurement Manager for Vancouver Coastal Health.

One of KBNF’s biggest challenges, however, was where to store the beds while they were being prepared for shipment to West Africa.

“Five hundred hospital beds take up a lot of space,” said KBNF President Marj Ratel.

We found warehouse space with the help of two partners—the Canaan Group in Richmond and Vancouver Businessman Yves Farges. Beds started arriving in October and KBNF staff and volunteers worked long hours to prepare the hospital beds for shipment. We added extra Volunteer Saturdays and in just two months, we loaded six containers filled with hospital beds, as well as mattresses and linens.

K-Bro Linen Systems donated all the linens to dress the beds: flannel sheets, fitted sheets, pillow cases—the works!

“I was incredibly honored to be part of this project,” said Steven Bittner of K-Bro Linen Systems. “I am proud not only to work for a company that cares, but I am proud of the system that we’ve built in finding a re-purpose for this.”

In total, we received 500 hospital beds from Vancouver Coastal Health with a total donated value of \$2 million.

Every bed matters, said Edith Kambere, when we asked her why she donated her time and help. Edith, originally from Uganda, understands the value of each bed sent to West Africa.

“A hospital bed is a primary tool to deliver safe quality patient care,” added Marj Ratel. “To have high quality beds is an enormous advantage for delivering health care in West Africa.”



In 2023, KBNF took on a collaborative project to ship **500** decommissioned hospital beds to Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and The Gambia. KBNF also received **502** hospital bed mattresses.

Total value of donated beds: **\$2 million.**

Total value of donated warehouse space: **\$130,000**



**\$4,000**

ESTIMATED VALUE  
OF EACH BED

**\$660,000**

ESTIMATED VALUE  
OF DONATION

**10 YEARS**

ESTIMATED LIFESPAN  
OF EACH BED

**PRICELESS**

IMPACT OF ONE HOSPITAL BED



In November 2023, KBNF shipped **165** Hospital Beds to the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra, Ghana

“Your generosity will not only positively impact our hospital, but also the entire region. We will be able to accommodate more patients and provide better care to those in need. Patients will be able to receive the care they deserve in a comfortable and safe environment.”

Dr. Harry Akoto  
Neurosurgeon, Deputy Medical Director  
Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Ghana



# A STORY OF HOPE IN MONTSERRADO COUNTY

IN JUNE 2023, A YOUNG PREGNANT WOMAN WAS RUSHED TO THE YEAGBAH TOWN CLINIC IN A REMOTE PART OF LIBERIA WITH DEEP CONCERN FOR HER SAFETY AND THE WELL-BEING OF BOTH THE MOTHER AND THE UNBORN CHILD.

At the clinic, however, staff had run out of needles and syringes to administer the needed medications. Given the remote nature of Yeagbah Town, accessing medical supplies posed a significant challenge. The husband set off on foot, determined to trek to the next town in search of the supplies that could save his wife and unborn child.

Just then, the World Hope International (WHI) team, one of our distribution partners in Liberia, arrived with medical supplies designated for the Yeagbah Town Clinic, including the needles and syringes needed to administer the treatment. The husband

who had already gone a distance, was immediately called back. Hope had arrived!

The young woman received the medication she needed and an hour later, the sound of a newborn’s cry filled the air. A healthy baby girl had arrived. The town rejoiced, grateful for the miracle that had unfolded before their eyes.

Having a KBNF warehouse in Liberia means more rural clinics have access to much-needed supplies and we are grateful for partners who go the extra mile to help deliver these supplies. The need remains great.



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HANDHELD PULSE  
OXIMETERS

BLOOD PRESSURE  
MONITORS

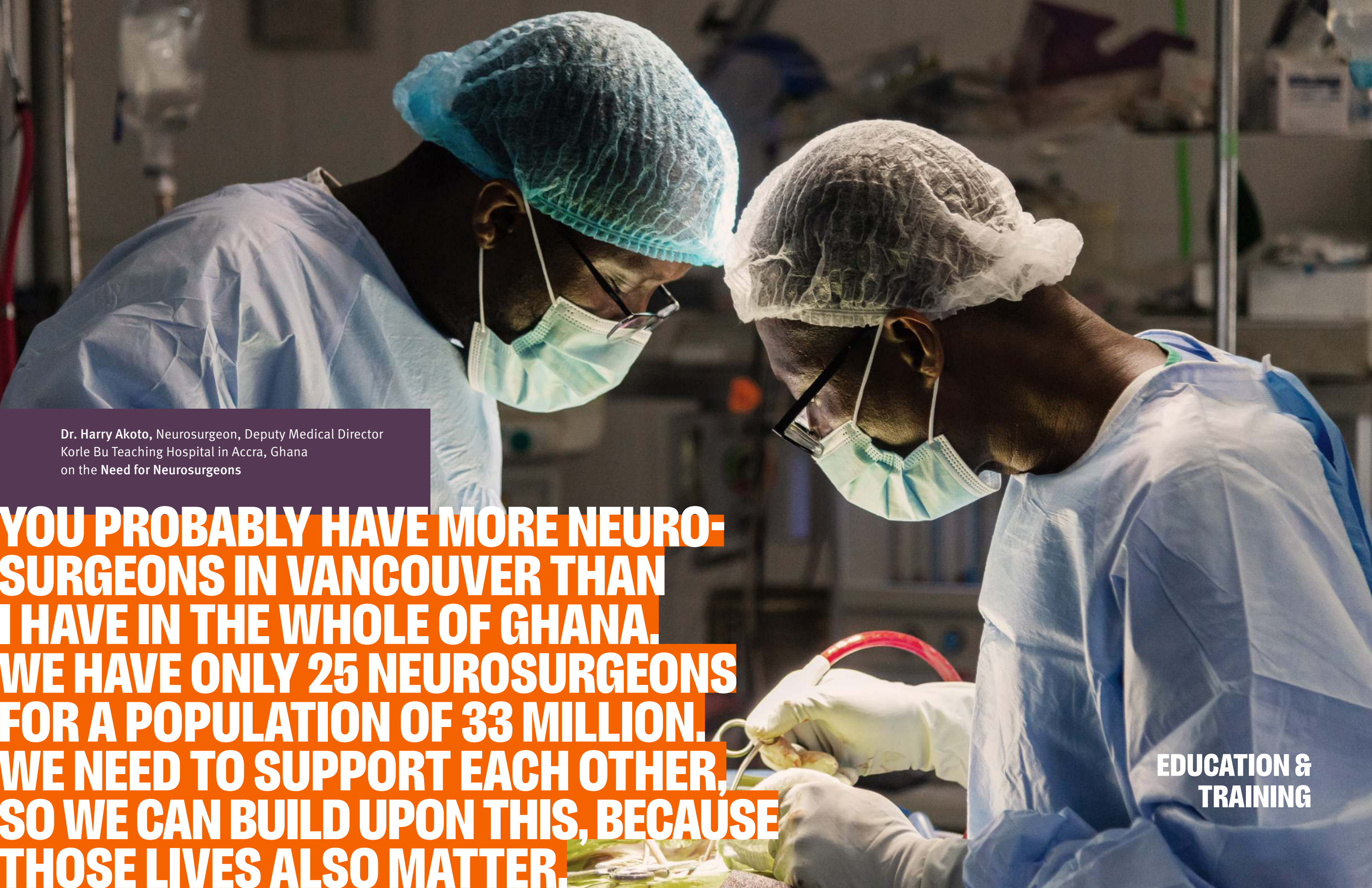
NURSING CARTS  
WITH SUPPLIES

PIECES OF  
OR EQUIPMENT

BABY  
WARMERS

STRETCHERS





Dr. Harry Akoto, Neurosurgeon, Deputy Medical Director  
Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra, Ghana  
on the Need for Neurosurgeons

**YOU PROBABLY HAVE MORE NEURO-  
SURGEONS IN VANCOUVER THAN  
I HAVE IN THE WHOLE OF GHANA.  
WE HAVE ONLY 25 NEUROSURGEONS  
FOR A POPULATION OF 33 MILLION.  
WE NEED TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER,  
SO WE CAN BUILD UPON THIS, BECAUSE  
THOSE LIVES ALSO MATTER.**

**EDUCATION &  
TRAINING**



# A HISTORIC VISIT: BRINGING TOGETHER PASSIONATE LEADERS IN SURGERY FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE

**IN JUNE 2023, KBNF CONDUCTED A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND MISSION IN REVERSE. PHYSICIANS, BUSINESS LEADERS-MANY OF THEM KBNF BOARD MEMBERS-LEFT THEIR BUSY SCHEDULES TO JOIN US IN VANCOUVER. PRIORITIES INCLUDED RAISING AWARENESS, ADVANCING EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND RENEWING AND ESTABLISHING NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN CANADA.**

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA’S (UBC) Division of Neurosurgery dedicated their Grand Rounds on Thursday, June 15 to the focus of “Necessity is the Mother of Invention.” The question at the center of the conversation was how West African neurosurgeons, with less than optimal resources, overcome challenges while achieving positive outcomes. It became clear that creativity and thinking outside the box are non-negotiables for health care providers in West Africa.

The genuine camaraderie between the West African surgeons and their British Columbia counterparts was palpable throughout the visit. Dr. Faizal Haji, a pediatric neurosurgeon, provided a comprehensive tour of BC Children’s Hospital’s state-of-the-art facility. Discussion on opportunities to launch neurosurgery fellowships ensued and plans are underway. Prof. Chris Honey, Head of the Division of Neurosurgery at UBC and Associate Professor of Surgery and Radiology and Associate Prof. Gary Redekop, Head of the Division of Surgery at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH), and the entire VGH team of neurosurgeons welcomed our visiting surgeons to participate in neurosurgery observerships during their stay.

On Friday, June 16, KBNF held a sold-out Gala entitled “Challenges and Victories of Neuroscience in West Africa, celebrating our esteemed guests. One of the highlights was a discussion between Dr. Chris Honey, Dr. Harry Akoto (Ghana) and Dr. Femi Bankole (Nigeria).

Bringing together passionate leaders in neurosurgery from across the globe allows for discussions on how to bridge significant gaps in resources, expertise, and infrastructure. Capacity-building initiatives and partnerships facilitate access to advanced medical technologies, treatments, and resources that may otherwise be lacking. Global medical partnerships have transformative effects on healthcare delivery and outcomes, and KBNF’s mission-in-reverse gave momentum to projects and relationships that promise to have a lasting impact.



During the week, the delegation from West Africa also visited our partners at K-Bro Linens, shared meals with KBNF Board alumni and visited the Surrey warehouse





# MENTORSHIP PROGRAM: ENHANCING NEUROSURGICAL CAPACITIES IN WEST AFRICA

Dr. Alvin Nah Doe and Nurse Teinein Bernard to Ghana

IN THE LANDSCAPE of West African healthcare, notable centers in neurosurgery are present. One significant hub of progress is the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital (KBTH), where Dr. Harry Akoto conducts spine and brain surgeries. Dr. Akoto, a valued participant in our multinational missions to Liberia and a KBNF (Liberia) Board Member, extended a pivotal invitation in June 2023, hosting Liberian Neurosurgeon Dr. Alvin Nah Doe and KBNF Nurse Teinein Bernard for a transformative three-week educational endeavor in Ghana.

The collaborative engagement, supported by KBNF, unfolded through a spectrum of clinical activities, including clinics, operating room time, and case discussions, serving as focal points of knowledge exchange and professional development.

Dr. Alvin Nah Doe participated in intricate procedures such as brain tumor removal surgeries and lumbar fusions, acquiring insights into diverse aspects of neurosurgical care. His experiences included understanding the indications and techniques of epidural steroid injections, appreciating proficient patient care in scenarios involving external ventricular drains (EVD) and central IV lines, and refining preoperative protocols for neurosurgical interventions.

Teinein Bernard diligently immersed herself within the operational environment of KBTH, shadowing and working alongside OR nurses. Her focus encompassed honing skills in sterile technique, optimizing patient positioning, and deepening her understanding of neurosurgical techniques and instrumentation.

**This collaborative initiative between healthcare professionals from Liberia and Ghana highlights the potency of global partnerships and knowledge transfer.** Their shared commitment to enhancing skills, disseminating best practices, and ultimately elevating healthcare outcomes underscores the transformative impact of such synergistic endeavors.

Through ongoing collaboration and capacity-building initiatives, KBNF aspires to foster sustainable advancements in neurosurgical care across West Africa, enriching the quality of life for patients and communities in the region.



## Thoughts from Nurse Teinein

**MY TRIP TO** Ghana was amazing. I was curious and interested in learning more about becoming a neuro perioperative nurse and I couldn't wait for the experience. It was my first time to travel out of Liberia and I'm grateful to the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation.

My first case as an observer was a left frontal convexity meningioma and the procedure was a craniotomy and excision. I wrote down the details of the supplies gathered for the case: drill bits, dura graft, craniofix, etc.

I learned about the different sutures used in neurosurgical cases, and I was taught the basis of perioperative care—the importance of organization, supported teamwork and sterilization.

I got along with the scrub nurses very well and they taught me a lot, including setting up the theater before a case by making sure all needed supplies are

laid out, all machines are plugged in and working properly, disinfecting of tables, handwashing technique, gowning, as well as prepping of the preoperative patient, including catheterization.

I started learning the different kinds of instruments during the cleaning which was my most important part. And at week three, I was opportune to start scrubbing alongside a scrub nurse and my first case experience lasted for almost 12 hours. It was worth it, because I was able to learn some techniques while on the table and also quickly grabbed the names of different kinds of instruments.

I can gladly say that I learned a lot that I brought back home to Liberia..I have been setting up and scrubbing in on most of our neurosurgical cases and basically know what is needed in each neurosurgical case, including spina bifida repair, laminectomy, fusion, craniotomy, craniectomy, VP shunt, EVD, etc.



# NEURO NURSING NETWORK IN WEST AFRICA

## PARTNERING WITH THE SWEDISH AFRICAN NEUROSURGERY COLLABORATION (SANC)

IN WEST AFRICA, NEUROLOGICAL PATIENTS FREQUENTLY SEEK TREATMENT AT HOSPITALS, OFTEN WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF SPECIALIZED NEURO HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS. IN THE FALL OF 2023, KBNF JOINED SANC TO ADDRESS THIS CRITICAL NEED BY PROVIDING EDUCATION TO NURSES CARING FOR NEURO PATIENTS.



SANC PURSUES NON-PROFIT activities to support the development of advanced neurosurgical activities in Africa. Operations are conducted through a bilateral interprofessional exchange in neurosurgery, neuroscience nursing and related activities between the members of the association and partners in Africa. With a shared emphasis on training and education, the collaboration between SANC and KBNF facilitated the growth of a robust network of neuro nurses in West Africa.

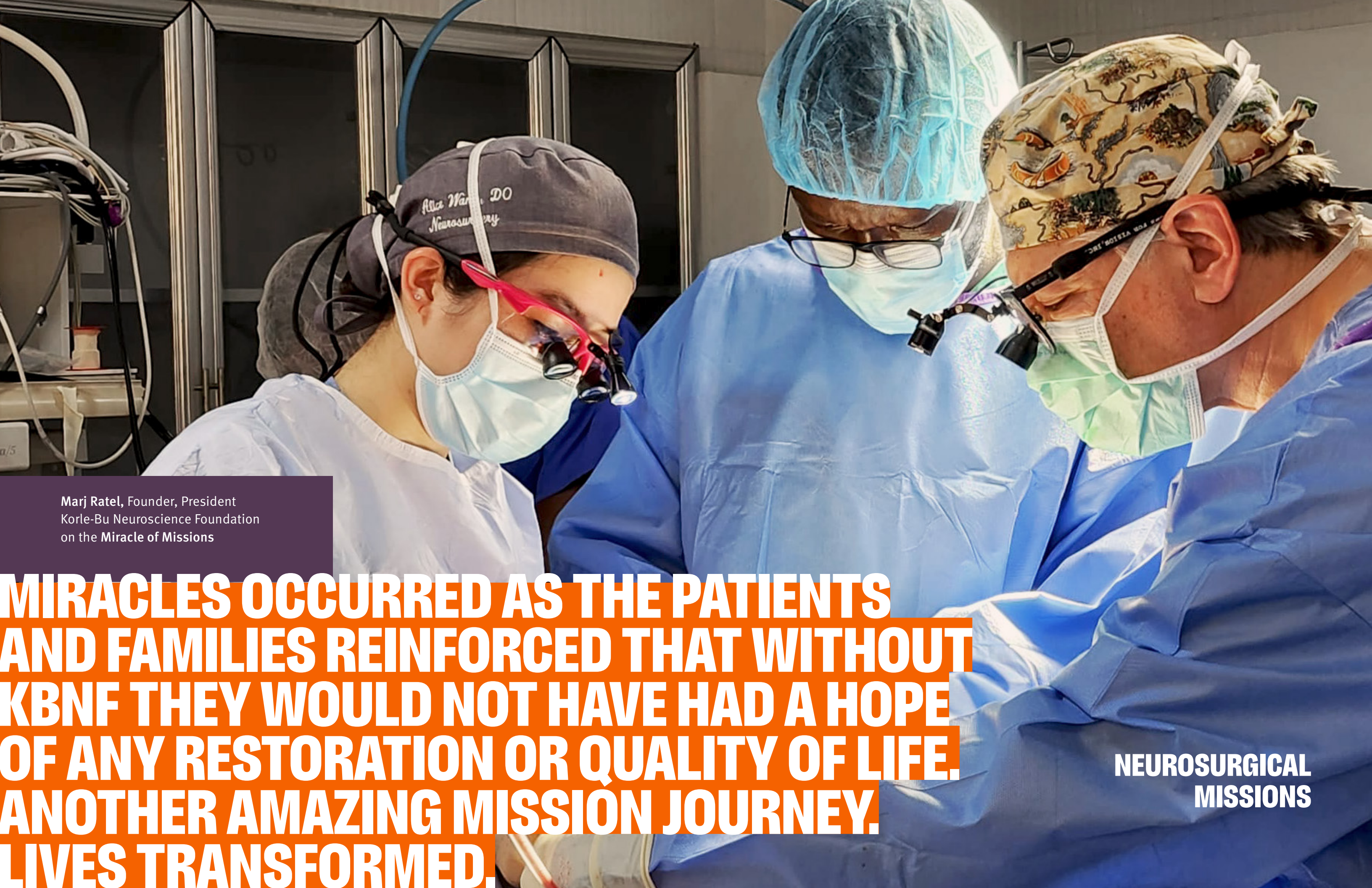
The Neuro Nurses in West Africa Network conducts monthly online meetings, drawing facilitators and participants from Sweden, Canada, The Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, and Liberia. Handouts and presentations are shared in a WhatsApp group and planning for each session is discussed with group leaders beforehand.

By the end of 2023, our participant group had grown to include 98 members, reflecting the continued success and expansion of our collaborative network. Together we are stronger as we expand neuro education and training in West Africa.

KBNF extends its gratitude to the Neuro Nurses in the West Africa Network team, including Charlotte Förars, Camilla Smedberg, Yahya Abdul Aziz Njie, Akpa Uloma Charity, Ramatu Adams Tanko, Victoria Forrest, and Kristina Faulkner, the KBNF Education and Training Chair.







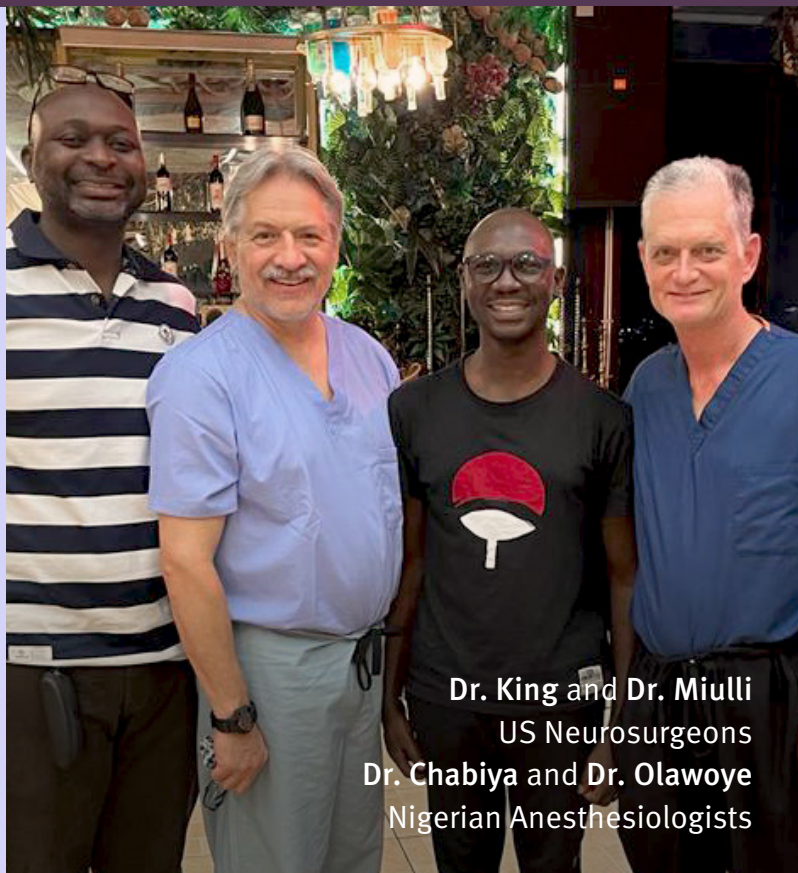
Marj Ratel, Founder, President  
Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation  
on the Miracle of Missions

**MIRACLES OCCURRED AS THE PATIENTS  
AND FAMILIES REINFORCED THAT WITHOUT  
KBNF THEY WOULD NOT HAVE HAD A HOPE  
OF ANY RESTORATION OR QUALITY OF LIFE.  
ANOTHER AMAZING MISSION JOURNEY.  
LIVES TRANSFORMED.**

**NEUROSURGICAL  
MISSIONS**



# THE 2023 NEUROSURGICAL MISSION



Dr. King and Dr. Miulli  
US Neurosurgeons  
Dr. Chabiya and Dr. Olawoye  
Nigerian Anesthesiologists

**EACH KBNF NEUROSURGICAL MISSION BRINGS SOME OF THE MOST COMPLEX SURGICAL INTERVENTIONS TO UNDER-RESOURCED AREAS IN WEST AFRICA. COORDINATING A MISSION IS A LOGISTICAL CHALLENGE AS WE BRING PEOPLE FROM SEVERAL DIFFERENT COUNTRIES TOGETHER TO SERVE.**

**DUE TO FLIGHT** delays and cancellations en route, our US-based surgery team was unable to attend the November 2022 mission. With supplies and equipment ready to go, the team subsequently coordinated a mission for January 2023 at the John F. Kennedy Medical Center (JFK) in Monrovia, Liberia.

Led by Dr. Dan Miulli and his wife, Sandy Miulli, Dr. Chris King, and Marj Ratel, the team was energized throughout the mission. Two neurosurgeons, three neurosurgery residents, three neuro nurses, and a scrub tech from the US spent the week at JFK, while two enthusiastic anesthesiologists joined us from Nigeria.

Online training was completed with JFK nurses prior to the mission. Dr Miulli, Emely Lopez, Katherine Ko and Cindy Herrera (three of the US nurses), and Marj

provided various education sessions—from neuro assessment to sterile wound care to IV insertions. This helped prepare the Liberian nurses for the post-op neuro patients they would soon be caring for.

Seventeen patients received surgical intervention and several babies received shunts. Working alongside Dr. Alvin Nah Doe, the team completed ventriculoperitoneal (VP) shunt insertions, decompressive laminectomies (with and without fusions), as well as tumor resections.

“Miracles occurred as the patients and families would reinforce that without KBNF they would not have had a hope of any restoration or quality of life,” said KBNF President Marj Ratel. “Another amazing mission journey. Lives transformed.”



January 2023 Neurosurgical Mission Team



# RUTH: THANK HEAVENS FOR A KBNF MISSION

**ON NEW YEAR'S** Eve in 2022, a young woman named Ruth and her "sister" were wrestling at home, when Ruth fell and suffered a complex cervical fracture. The family rushed her to the hospital where Gwendolyn, a trauma nurse at the John F. Kennedy Medical Centre (JFK) received her in the emergency department. Ruth's right arm was incapacitated while she was also in intense and piercing pain. A hard collar was applied immediately and Dr. Alvin Nah Doe recommended flat bed rest.

There were very few options for Ruth. The family could not afford the US\$10,000 price tag to have surgery done in Ghana, as well as travel and accommodation expenses. In despair, her father determined they should just take her home.

But then the family learned that a KBNF mission would arrive in mid-January. It seemed like an answer to prayer. The biggest challenge, however, was to keep Ruth on bed rest for those several weeks, keeping as still as possible until the KBNF mission. Any unexpected movement could have meant Ruth would have been permanently paralyzed. With the support of her family and the JFK staff, she did it.



Meanwhile, Dr. Chris King traveled with a specialty spinal set to Liberia and Dr. Alvin Nah Doe prepared Ruth for surgery.

Stabilization of Ruth's spine required a four-hour posterior cervical spine surgery followed by cautiously turning Ruth over intra-operatively, as well as stabilizing her anteriorly.

Post-operatively, when Ruth wiggled her right fingers, everyone in the room applauded. Within two days after her surgery, Ruth was able to functionally use her right arm and mobilization commenced.

Ruth returned home after her surgery and today she is enrolled as a student in university. She is a living testament of the caring dedication of our KBNF family.



# GWENDOLYN'S SPECIAL NURSING EXPERIENCE

MEET **GWENDOLYN KESSELEE**, A TRAUMA NURSE AT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY MEDICAL CENTRE (JFK) IN **MONROVIA, LIBERIA.**



**IN FEBRUARY 2023**, after our January neurosurgical mission ended, KBNF hired Gwendolyn to provide post-operative medical care to our mission patients. It was the first time ever we had done this. After previous missions, we had noticed that patients would benefit from ongoing nursing support, both in hospital and while transitioning back into the community.

**We wondered what would happen if we devoted a full-time nurse to do post-operative care for a whole month?**

For Gwendolyn, visiting patients at their homes, became a very special part of her nursing experience.

“Since becoming a nurse,” she said, “I’ve never had the time to visit my patients at their residences, to know them personally and be a part of their recovery story. Even though I was working, the experience of spending time with them at their homes was exciting.”

While visiting them at their homes and in their communities, she could check on their recovery and make sure their wounds were properly cared for and treated. Any of their major concerns during their recovery process were immediately channeled to Dr. Alvin Nah Doe for quick intervention.

“I’ve come to understand that reaching out to your patients after they have been discharged from the hospital, makes them feel important and helps their recovery,” said Gwendolyn.

She added: “I want to take this time to extend my thanks and appreciation to God first and to you for affording me the opportunity to work with KBNF for a period of one month. It was indeed a great experience. I am truly grateful.”

Gwendolyn continues to participate in KBNF missions and is a vibrant member of our team.





# MEET THE KUEI FAMILY

IN MAY 2023, Julia, Adrian, Natalie, Jayden and Josiah Kuei began joining us at our Surrey warehouse to volunteer their time and energy. They jumped in wherever needed, whether sorting medical supplies, folding linens or preparing mattresses.

“Adrian and I have so many fond memories of us volunteering with our own parents when we were kids,” said Julia. “It’s what makes us look for ways to serve with our kids as we’ve become parents.”

The Kuie’s are a homeschooling family who live in their RV, so they can spend winters in Arizona, play pickleball year-round and live to serve and love their neighbors wherever they go.

**Volunteering is a core value.**

Julia believes volunteering changes everyone. “I think you learn a lot about each other when you’re doing something that has no direct benefit to yourself and I love that ... Every time you do something that is not self-serving, it changes you.” Their family has also learned that volunteering doesn’t necessarily require a plane ticket. “We’re not in a season where we could get on a plane,” said Julia, “so we were looking for something that involved everyone and where we could make an impact across the world.”

Their enthusiasm helped spread the word about KBNF and soon Adrian’s parents, Alex and Evadne, also joined us at the warehouse.

“Having three generations working together is such a gift,” Julia added.



The Kuei Family  
KBNF Volunteers  
Idelette McVicker  
Volunteer Coordinator

YOU DON'T HAVE  
TO CROSS AN  
OCEAN TO SERVE  
MEANINGFULLY

Julia Kuei  
KBNF Volunteer

# VOLUNTEER IMPACT

5,653

TOTAL HOURS SPENT  
VOLUNTEERING



218

NEW VOLUNTEERS  
IN CANADA





Walk for the Bu



Gala Dinner



Spring Garden Party



Christmas Celebration



Gala Dinner



Christmas Celebration



Walk for the Bu



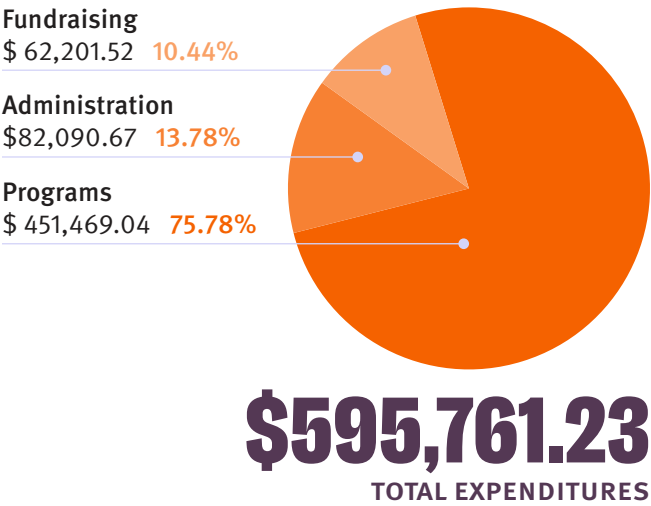
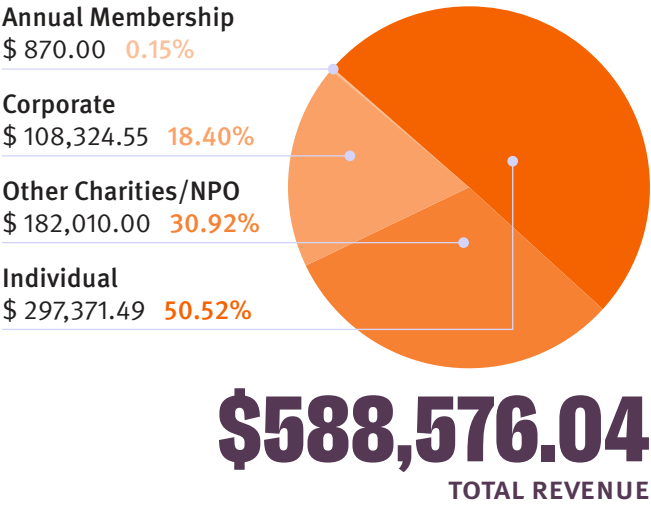
Spring Garden Party



Income Statement 01/01/2023 to 12/31/2023

Balance Sheet As at 12/31/2023

Consolidated Budget 2024



REVENUE	
Annual Membership	\$ 870.00
Donations - Individual	\$ 297,371.49
Donations - Corporate	\$ 108,324.55
Donations - Other Charities/NPO's	\$ 182,010.00
Total Revenue	\$ 588,576.04

EXPENSES	
Accounting & Legal Fees	\$ 9,929.01
Advertising & Promotions	\$ 1,909.09
Bank Charges	\$ 4,181.16
Consulting - Admin	\$ 6,000.00
Fees - Credit Card	\$ 6,960.10
Fees - Paypal	\$ 25.63
Foreign Exchange	\$ -255.81
Fuel Expense	\$ 1,188.51
Insurance	\$ 2,772.68
Internet/Electricity	\$ 742.88
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 4,375.17
Meeting - Core Program	\$ 1,761.42
Media & Marketing	\$ 9,867.66
Memberships/Fees	\$ 6,557.28
Office Expenses	\$ 1,334.30
Postage, Printing & Copying	\$ 2,921.46
Projects/Missions Expenses	\$ 39,443.73
Medication for Missions	\$ 1,503.71
Shipping Charges	\$ 113,904.49
Special Event Expenses	\$ 22,829.46
Subcontractor/Nurse Assistants	\$ 295.50
Supplies - Office Admin	\$ 1,137
Supplies - Office Core Program	\$ 533.25
Technology	\$ 2,363.15
Travel & Car Rental - Core Program	\$ 14,069.14
Travel & Car Rental - Fundraising	\$ 1,642.01
Warehouse Expenses	\$ 26,408.01
Warehouse Rent	\$ 138,271.62
Wages & Salaries	\$ 162,296.52
El Expense	\$ 3,337.28
CPP Expense	\$ 7,075.56
WCB Expense	\$ 380.22
Total Expenses	\$ 595,761.23

NET INCOME	\$ -7,185.19
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ASSETS	
Current Assets	
USD Accounts	\$ 13,709.82
CAD Accounts	\$ 87,888.29
LRD Account	\$ -246.62
Petty Cash	\$ 1,524.01
GST Recoverable	\$ 7,437.04
Deposit on New Warehouse	\$ 100,000.00
Deposit for Rented Warehouse	\$ 14,885.59
Donation Accruals	\$ 25,549.94
Total Current Assets	\$ 250,748.07

Capital Assets	
Computer Equipment	\$ 703.56
Total Capital Assets	\$ 703.56

TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 251,451.63
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LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ 11,849.87
TD Visa Payable	\$ 380.22
El Payable	\$ 505.30
CPP Payable	\$ 793.30
Income Tax Payable	\$ 1,608.77
Receiver General Payable	\$ 2,907.37
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 15,137.46

TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 15,137.46
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Long Term Liabilities	
Warehouse Hold (Rick Diamond)	\$ 100,000.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	\$ 100,000.00

EQUITY	
Retained Earnings	
Retained Earnings - Previous Year	\$ 143,499.36
Current Earnings	\$ -7,185.19
Total Retained Earnings	\$ 136,314.17

TOTAL EQUITY	\$ 136,314.17
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 251,451.63
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\*All significant intercompany amounts have been removed

REVENUE	
Annual Membership	\$ 1,500.00
Donations - Individual	\$ 445,000.00
Donations - Corporate	\$ 75,000.00
Donations - Other Char./NPO's	\$ 120,000.00
Other Receipts - General	\$ 10,000.00
Total Revenue	\$ 651,000.00

EXPENSES	
Accounting & Legal Fees	\$ 9,000.00
Advertising & Promotions	\$ 3,748.00
Bank Charges	\$ 2,820.00
Consulting - Admin	\$ 6,000.00
Fees - Credit Card	\$ 7,409.00
Fuel Expense	\$ 5,400.00
Insurance	\$ 3,432.00
Internet/Electricity	\$ 1,704.00
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 2,016.00
Meeting - Core Program	\$ 1,308.00
Office Expenses	\$ 1,716.00
Projects/Missions Expenses	\$ 142,050.00
Shipping Charges	\$ 91,500.00
Special Event Expenses	\$ 6,000.00
Subcontractor/Nurse Asst.	\$ 5,676.00
Technology	\$ 540.00
Warehouse Expenses	\$ 18,000.00
Warehouse Rent	\$ 166,618.15
Wages & Salaries	\$ 155,000.04
El Expense	\$ 3,602.28
CPP Expense	\$ 6,217.80
WCB Expense	\$ 402.96
Total Expenses	\$ 640,160.23

NET INCOME	\$ 10,839.77
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# PARTNER WITH US

## VOLUNTEER

### At the new KBNF Centre in Ladner, BC:

We welcome volunteers who want to offer their time, gifts, skills and expertise. We have a variety of options for anyone wanting to make a tangible difference. Come help us sort medical supplies, fold linens, prepare neonatal boxes or help load a container. Rally your class, your sports team, your work group, youth group, small group or your family. We love volunteers and would love to hear from you. Contact Idelette McVicker, our Volunteer & Communications Coordinator at [idelette@kbnf.org](mailto:idelette@kbnf.org).

Idelette McVicker: [idelette@kbnf.org](mailto:idelette@kbnf.org)

## JOIN A SURGICAL MISSION

Our annual medical missions require medical professionals like neurosurgeons, neurologists, nurses, respiratory therapists, rehabilitation professionals, allied healthcare specialists, biomedical engineers, as well as carpenters, handy people, coordinators, storytellers and other big-hearted people with a variety of expertise. Apply today to join one of our upcoming missions.

[hello@kbnf.org](mailto:hello@kbnf.org)

## SUPPORT KBNF FINANCIALLY

Donors provide the vital support we need to offer life-saving surgeries, train health care personnel, and ship critically-needed medical supplies to West Africa. Get involved with a monthly donation or a one-time donation. Every gift makes an impact.

[kbnf.org/donate](https://kbnf.org/donate)

### In North America:

Support our Canada-based operations from wherever you are in the world. We're looking for help with tech/IT, graphic design, social media, communications, building projects, logistics and more.

# OUR PARTNERS

### Financial Partners



### Medical Equipment and Supplies



### Partnerships





# INFORMATION

[kbnf.org](http://kbnf.org)

[hello@kbnf.org](mailto:hello@kbnf.org)

+1 (604) 738-2076

# GIVE ONLINE

[kbnf.org/donate](http://kbnf.org/donate)

# E-TRANSFERS

[admin@kbnf.org](mailto:admin@kbnf.org)

# CANADIAN CHEQUES

Make cheques payable to

**Korle-Bu Foundation**

9131 207B Street,

Langley, BC, Canada V1M 2P5

Charity No. 85924 6837 RR0001

# USA DONATIONS

[kbnf.org/donate](http://kbnf.org/donate)

In the United States, Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation partners with the Institute of Global Perioperative Care (IGPC), which accepts American donations on our behalf and issues tax receipts. Donors giving to KBNF will receive a tax receipt from IGPC at the end of each year, an IRS 501(c)(3) organization (83-3792196). All funds will be directed to Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation.



**KORLE-BU  
NEUROSCIENCE  
FOUNDATION**