

KBNF **ANNUAL** **REPORT** **2024**



Dr. Alvin Nah Doe
Neurosurgeon



KORLE-BU
NEUROSCIENCE
FOUNDATION



WHEN A PATIENT
IS SUFFERING,
WHEN SOMEBODY
WHO HAS NO HOPE
SUDDENLY GETS
HOPE, IT'S LIKE
SUNSHINE.

Dr. Harry Akoto, Neurosurgeon
on the **Power of Hope**

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Marj Ratel
Founder, President
Korle-Bu Neuroscience
Foundation

DEFEAT IS NOT AN OPTION

**IN OUR QUEST FOR NEURO-
SURGICAL EXCELLENCE IN
WEST AFRICA, THE KORLE-BU
NEUROSCIENCE FOUNDATION
(KBNF) REMAINS DEFIANT
DESPITE OVERWHELMING
OBSTACLES. WE REFUSE
TO GIVE UP, GIVE IN OR STAND
BACK. INSTEAD, WE PRESS
FORWARD.**

IN 2024, OUR HEARTS WERE TOUCHED by the fate of five patients in Liberia who were facing irreversible blindness. Benign pituitary tumours were encroaching on their optic nerves, which meant their sight was eroding, and their independence, productivity, and, ultimately, their lives were severely impacted. Silent despair was the prevailing emotion. The reality in Liberia dictated that there was no hope for them. But a miracle happened. KBNF became aware of these patients—each one of them precious to us—and despair took a back seat.

Pituitary tumours require highly specialized care, so we conducted a second Neurosurgical Advancement Trip in Liberia to care for these patients. In November 2024, Dr. Femi Bankole flew in from Nigeria, along with three neuro nurses. Depending on the size, specialized transsphenoidal surgery tools and a neuro-microscope enable the removal of the tumour via the nasal passage. This is one of Dr. Bankole’s specialties.

But these missions are never without extreme challenges. Days before the surgeries, our neuro-microscope suffered a catastrophic crash. Replacement parts to restore function were available at a substantial cost from South Africa. Could we acquire and install them in time? How would we cover the cost? People’s hopes and the dream of lives restored hung in the balance.

Our KBNF team, neurosurgeons and members of the John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital’s surgery department brainstormed. An endoscope brought by our Lagos mission team, along with the use of a video tower provided by Liberian urologists, meant that the surgeries could go ahead. It wasn’t ideal, but we would make it work.

And we did.

I watched as a 19-year-old patient quietly struggled to see where to sign his name on the surgery consent form. All he could see were shadows. We realized he required a more invasive craniotomy, but the resection could not be completed without a neuro-microscope. Not willing to accept defeat, American donations to cover the replacement parts immediately ensued while our expert biomedical engineer sleuthed out a quality neuro-microscope from Finland.

We were adamant that this young man would have his tumour removed and his sight restored.

Where do KBNF’s strengths lie? What are our assets? KBNF’s multinational, collaborative extended family, arising from three continents, radiates compassion and resolve. We strive to deliver excellence. Our vision for excellence is embraced and integrated into transformative healthcare delivery by our West African family. Together, we are exhibiting the way forward, and with the right resources, we will sustainably impact the entire region.

Our mission is audacious. We know that nothing great has ever been accomplished by dreaming small dreams. We’re real. Our partners and leaders in West Africa get it, and enthusiasm for what could be continues to grow.

Together, we can create change because, at KBNF, defeat is not an option.



During November 2024’s
Neurosurgical Advancement Trip
3 countries were represented
6 surgeries were conducted

29

SURGERIES CONDUCTED
DURING FEBRUARY 2024
ADVANCEMENT TRIP

7

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED
DURING FEBRUARY 2024
ADVANCEMENT TRIP

42

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS AND SUPPORT
STAFF DURING FEBRUARY 2024
ADVANCEMENT TRIP

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.

THE
GAMBIA

SIERRA
LEONE

LIBERIA

GHANA

NIGERIA

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.

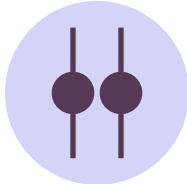


MISSIONS

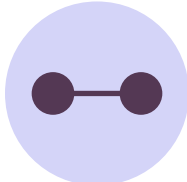
OUR SPECIALIZED TEAMS, including neurosurgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, occupational therapists and biomedical engineers collaborate with local medical professionals to perform essential brain and spine surgeries.



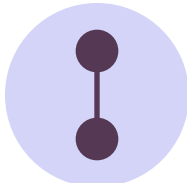
EDUCATION & TRAINING



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.

FOUNDATIONS FOR NEUROSURGICAL EXCELLENCE IN WEST AFRICA



ACCORDING TO DR. HARRY AKOTO, neurosurgeon and Acting Medical Director of the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Ghana, there are three elements necessary for neurosurgical excellence: Human resource development, infrastructure development and health funding.

While these elements exist in Ghana and across West Africa, their current state is, as Dr. Harry Akoto put it, “in a very rudimentary manner.” The journey towards achieving true neurosurgical excellence in the region demands a concerted and deliberate effort from West African governments and dedicated partners like the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation (KBNF).

The stark reality of neurosurgical practice is its high cost.

“Neurosurgery is daunting,” agrees Marj Ratel, KBNF Founder and President. Building neuroscience is tedious and expensive.

“With a few thousands of dollars, you could easily create a relatively good obstetrics and gynecology centre, whereas an operating microscope alone—a good one—is in the millions of dollars,” Dr. Akoto highlighted. “The tools we work with are extremely expensive.”

So are the treatments. This financial burden is further compounded by the absence of strong insurance systems, making essential neurosurgical care inaccessible for many.

Despite these challenges, significant strides have been made. For decades, Ghana had only one to two neurosurgeons serving the whole country. Currently, there are approximately 26 neurosurgeons actively working in Ghana. This growth has undoubtedly eased pressure, yet the impact remains limited.

“Even though we have 26, not all of us are being put to full use,” explained Dr. Akoto. “Why? Because the operating centres have no tools to work with. Even though there is some manpower improvement, service delivery has remained rudimentary.

So, unless you equip these people with the basic tools for them to even do basic neurotrauma, that becomes a difficult task to achieve in terms of excellence in neuro services.”

The need for continuous training is paramount, both for established practitioners and new graduates. While West African Colleges have ramped up training, a critical gap remains in subspecialty areas. “You cannot talk about excellence if you cannot provide subspecialty care,” Dr. Akoto said. “For example, all of Ghana does not have a functional pediatric neurosurgeon. And that means there is always going to be a ton of patients with neurosurgical needs which are not met.” This lack of specialized expertise, coupled with insufficient infrastructure and equipment, still hinders the ability to provide comprehensive and advanced neurosurgical care.



Furthermore, the retention of skilled professionals poses a significant challenge. The lure of better opportunities in wealthier nations leads to a brain drain. Of Dr. Akoto’s class of over 70 medical school graduates, only around 20 are left in Ghana. “There are more Ghanaian-trained doctors in the US and Canada than those who are retained in the country,” he said. Governments need to pay enough in salaries to create motivating environments for training and professional growth.

“Government should be ready to dedicate funding to building excellent neurosurgery centres,” Dr. Akoto added. “Have training opportunities in and out of the country,” and “Invest into research.” Research is crucial for continuous improvement and adapting best practices to the local context.

Continued on next page



FOUNDATIONS FOR NEUROSURGICAL EXCELLENCE IN WEST AFRICA

KBNF: A CATALYST FOR CHANGE



The Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation plays a vital role in addressing these challenges. Dr. Akoto believes one of KBNF's most significant contributions lies in “advocacy.” By leveraging its connections and expertise, KBNF can advocate with international organizations like the G4 Alliance, as well as directly with West African governments, to highlight the critical need for investment in neurosurgery.

KBNF's commitment extends beyond advocacy to direct action in building local capacity. It's critical to train local professionals to a high degree, enabling them to deliver continuous care.

Liberia stands as a testament to the urgent need for neurosurgical advancement.

“Neurosurgery is absolutely important and I think it can be the core of healthcare in Liberia,” said Dr. Ben Kolee, Liberia's Chief Pathologist and KBNF Board member. He longs to “see Liberia with a high-quality, sustainable neurosurgical system.”

This sentiment is echoed by Liberian Neurosurgeon Dr. Augustine Ballah, who emphasizes the fundamental human right to neurosurgical care. “People are dying if nothing is done,” said Dr. Ballah. “We have to look at it from the perspective that neurosurgery is a human right. No baby should die from a congenital abnormality that is neurosurgical and could be corrected.”

The challenges in Liberia are significant. Dr. Alvin Nah Doe reports receiving over 50 spine and head injuries weekly at JFK Memorial Hospital. He underscores the difficulty in caring for these patients without adequate neurosurgical capacity.

KBNF's goal is to reach a point where Liberia can provide “sustainable neurosurgical care on a continuous basis without the support of international teams and groups,” said KBNF Executive Director Rose Woller.

Foundations have been laid through further education and training, provision of equipment and supplies, and financial support for patients. However, more is still needed. KBNF actively collaborates with neurosurgeons regionally and internationally. KBNF also supports surgeries by providing essential resources, building capacity through training and hiring, and working to reduce the cost of care.

Building, supporting, and sustaining excellence in neuroscience is a long-term commitment, one that promises a future where hope and healing are accessible to all.



ACQUISITION & DISTRIBUTION

BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF STRENGTH IN LADNER

THE KORLE-BU NEUROSCIENCE FOUNDATION SPENT FOUR HAPPY YEARS IN THE BASEMENT OF VOLKEN'S MARKET AND FURNITURE IN SURREY, BC. IT WAS A PLACE OF RESPITE DURING COVID, WHERE WE COULD GATHER SAFELY, SIX FEET APART, WHILE KEEPING OPERATIONS GOING.

In 2023, we got notice that the building had been sold and we had to relocate by the end of April 2024. We worked hard to move equipment and supplies, shipped as much as we could and evaluated everything in the warehouse before moving it to the new location in Ladner.



The Surrey warehouse held so many fond memories.

Who will ever forget pushing hospital beds and moving pallets along the corridors of that basement warehouse, right up to the commercial elevator and up to the loading dock for loads? We spent many happy Monday nights, Wednesdays, Fridays and Volunteer Saturdays in that basement warehouse.

We loved the large table where we could fold linens and hang out. John and Katie McSween would come every Saturday to fold linens and help us get ready for the loads. On Monday nights, volunteers like Emma Sullivan, would pop by to fold linens before her ball hockey practice.

We are sad that many of these faithful volunteers weren't able to move with us, but we will forever be grateful for the season they served in that capacity.

In May, we moved into our new warehouse in Ladner. When we first took possession, the 10,000-square-foot warehouse needed a lot of work: paint, good lighting, a ceiling,

shelving, running water, and bathrooms. Slowly but surely, our team and volunteers worked to get it organized and set up.

In July, we held a Summer BBQ at the new warehouse and officially called it the new KBNF Centre in Ladner. As we sat outside in the summer sun along the tables, we enjoyed hamburgers and the beauty of community.

Change is hard, but together, we have transformed the warehouse in Ladner into a welcoming, bright space where we can do good and meaningful work together.

In September 2024, we did our first load out of the new warehouse to send hospital beds, stretchers, and medical equipment and supplies to Liberia.

We are so grateful for the years we spent at the warehouse in Surrey. Now we are excited to grow roots and a solid foundation in Ladner. We are grateful for sunlight that peaks in through the front door on sunny days and a community of volunteers who show up to support neuroscience and health care in West Africa.

42 distributions in Liberia in 2024

Shipped 10 pallets of medication worth \$560,000 for \$10,000 in partnership with HPIC Canada

GRATITUDE FOR AN ULTRASOUND MACHINE

“I am writing to express our deepest gratitude for your generous donation of a multifunction ultrasound machine to our organization. Your kindness and support will have a lasting impact on the lives of many pregnant women in Liberia.

Access to ultrasound services is limited and costly in our country. This lack of access often leads to complications during labor, which can result in maternal death. Your donation will enable us to provide this life-saving technology to pregnant women in both urban and rural communities.

With the help of this ultrasound machine, Samaritan Mission will be able to reach out to underprivileged pregnant women and ensure they receive the care and support they need. Your generosity is truly a blessing for these women and will make a significant difference in their lives.

Once again, thank you for your kindness and generosity.

Your support is invaluable to us and we are grateful for the opportunity to work together towards improving affordable healthcare in Liberia.”

Samaritan Mission, July 2024



DISTRIBUTING A WHOLE CONTAINER FULL OF MEDICATION

THE KORLE-BU NEUROSCIENCE FOUNDATION IS **EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE A PARTNERSHIP** WITH HEALTH PARTNERS INTERNATIONAL (HPIC). TOGETHER, WE ARE **EMBARKING ON A MISSION** TO DELIVER LIFE-SAVING MEDICATIONS TO UNDER-RESOURCED RURAL **CLINICS** AND **HOSPITALS** ACROSS **LIBERIA**.

ON OCT. 10, we had the wonderful privilege of loading a container with 10 pallets of medication to ship to Liberia. This was the first time we were able to partner with Health Partners International Canada (HPIC) on this scale, sending medication with a retail value of over \$560,000. This provided a significant boost to the healthcare system in some of Liberia's most vulnerable regions.

The Challenge
In Liberia, access to essential medications is still a critical barrier to health care. Many communities face dire shortages that can mean the difference between life and death. With this partnership, KBNF started the journey of delivering life-saving medication to under-resourced rural clinics and hospitals across Liberia.





NEUROSURGICAL ADVANCEMENT TRIPS

2024 NEUROSURGICAL ADVANCEMENT TRIPS

Every Neurosurgical Advancement Trip is a mission. As we gather together neurosurgeons, nurses and rehabilitation experts in the region and from around the world, our focus is to provide more equal access to neurosurgical excellence to patients who might not otherwise have access to these surgeries in their own country. These missions also provide a unique opportunity for education and training, whether during preparation, in the operating room or in post-operative care. Every Neurosurgical Advancement Trip requires collaboration and a web of support. The cost is great, but so are the rewards.

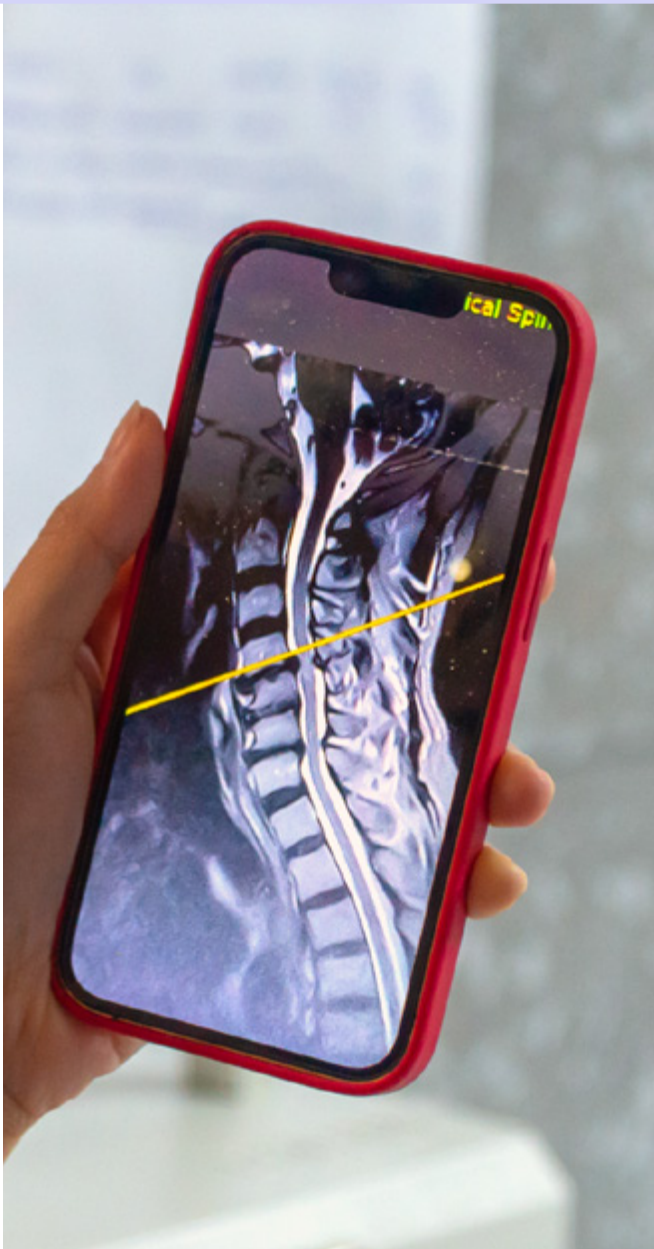
FEBRUARY 18-MARCH 1, 2024 MONROVIA, LIBERIA

THE FEBRUARY 2024 Neurosurgical Advancement Trip was a multi-national effort with participants from Canada, the United States, Ghana, Nigeria, The Gambia and Sweden all gathering in Liberia for two weeks of surgeries. Six neurosurgeons and three neurosurgery residents participated.

This mission was conducted in partnership with Dr. Dan Miulli’s foundation “Helping Those In Need,” leading a comprehensive team from the United States for the first week of surgeries. Dr. Harry Akoto, Acting Medical Director at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra, Ghana led the second week of surgeries. Dr. Akoto was accompanied by Muriel Aseye-Senaya, scrub nurse and OR supervisor at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital (KBTH).

Hydrocephalus Mini-Mission

Partnering on a Hydrocephalus Mini-Mission with Dr. Augustine Ballah: KBNF was proud to partner with Dr. Augustine Ballah, the International Christian Medical Fellowship (ICMFEL), Health Partners International and others to provide VP shunts, medical supplies and medication towards a Hydrocephalus mini mission in Liberia in July 2024. Seven pediatric patients received free surgeries and a chance at a better life.



NOVEMBER 11-15, 2024
MONROVIA, LIBERIA
FOCUS: PITUITARY TUMORS

EARLIER IN THE YEAR, during our February Neuro-surgical Advancement Trip, we identified several patients with pituitary tumors. Due to the very specialized care required, we decided it would be best to devote a special mission to these patients.

Rosalyn, a 44-year-old widow and university graduate in Liberia, was one of these patients. She suffered from a large pituitary tumor. Her vision had remained partially intact, but during her consultation she told Dr. Alvin Nah Doe that she could not participate in our November Mission since she could not afford her final diagnostic tests. When Dr. Doe asked Rosalyn how much was still needed, she said US\$100 would cover her expenses. Waiting another year would have meant her sight would likely have been fully compromised and her decline in health irreversible. KBNF intervened.

Patients like Rosalyn are why we do what we do.

Patients with pituitary tumors are at risk of becoming incapacitated. Blindness is a serious factor, since the tumor can encroach on optic nerves. Many of these patients had been waiting months—even years—for a miracle. Dr. Alvin Nah Doe had a list of five patients who were eligible for surgery immediately.

Dr. Femi Bankole, professor and head of Neurosurgery at Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH)/ College of Medicine UNILAG was the lead neurosurgeon for our November KBNF Neurosurgical Advancement Trip in Liberia. He was accompanied by two OR nurses Mrs. Glory Edet and Mrs. Calista Adeiya. KBNF President Marj Ratel and Shirley Scharfe, KBNF Shipping and Logistics Manager, joined from Canada.

These surgeries are vastly resected through the nasal cavity, and so Dr. Bankole also carried with him a transsphenoidal surgical set—a critical piece of equipment for doing these surgeries. This set is not currently available in Liberia, which means a barrier to neurosurgical care and one of the many reasons we support regional collaboration.

Six patients received surgery during our November Neurosurgical Advancement Trip.



PATIENT STORY:

MONICA LOGAN

MONICA LOGAN (48) is a Registered Nurse in Liberia and has been working at Firestone Hospital for the past 11 years.

In September 2023, Monica started experiencing severe headaches. Despite medication and doing everything in her effort to relieve the pain, the headaches persisted. A few months later she started experiencing blurry vision, dizziness and hearing loss. Her headache could no longer be controlled by analgesics.

On October 30, Monica collapsed and became unconscious while on duty at the hospital. She was rushed to the ER, stabilized and then referred to JFK Memorial Hospital to see a neurosurgeon.

Meanwhile, Monica experienced several episodes of seizures. In November 2023, Monica was diagnosed with a meningioma and her only option was surgery. But Monica did not have enough money to pay for this surgery. That’s when she learned about the team from the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation.

In February 2024, Monica received surgery and the tumor was removed. Her daughters stayed by her bedside as she recovered. What a happy day when Monica was finally released and she was able to walk out of the hospital without headaches or pain.

In October 2024, Monica paid our KBNF family a visit to say thank you. She has been able to return to her full scope of responsibility as a nurse at Firestone Hospital. We are so grateful to see our mission patients doing so well.



EDUCATION
& TRAINING

WEST AFRICAN NEURO NURSES NETWORK (WANNN): STRENGTHENING NEUROSURGICAL CARE ACROSS WEST AFRICA

THE WEST AFRICAN NEURO NURSES NETWORK (WANNN) WAS BORN FROM A VISION OF **UNITY AND PROGRESS** FOLLOWING A SUCCESSFUL 2022 NEUROSURGICAL ADVANCEMENT TRIP IN THE GAMBIA, LED BY THE **SWEDISH AFRICAN NEUROSURGERY COLLABORATION (SANC)**.

Recognizing the need for a stronger, connected nursing community, post-operative neuro nurses initiated this multinational network to advance neurosurgical education and patient care across West Africa.

In October 2023, KBNF proudly joined WANNN, expanding its reach to Liberia and strengthening ties with Nigerian neuro nurses. Today, WANNN has grown to **114** members from The Gambia, Nigeria, Liberia, Sweden, Ghana, and Canada, with support from both SANC and KBNF.

The network hosted **24** online lectures in 2024 and meets regularly to exchange expertise, enhance training, and improve patient outcomes.

HOW HAS WANNN IMPACTED NURSES?

Access to Skillful Presenters

“I’m grateful to be a part and member of WANNN. It’s an amazing initiative bringing Neuro Nurses together from different parts of the world sharing ideas, knowledge and experience. A big thank you to our presenters who tirelessly take their time helping us expand our knowledge.”

Optimizing Performance

“The lessons and materials from WANNN ... help avoid mistakes, optimize performance and ensure continuous improvement. I can put into practice or implement what I’ve learned during patient care plus I can share my ideas with fellow nurses.”

Expanding Understanding

“Being part of the West African Neuro Nurses Network (WANNN) online learning sessions has been incredibly meaningful to me. It is an honor to connect with such a supportive and knowledgeable group of professionals. These sessions have had a huge impact on my growth, and I am grateful to be part of this unique, interactive learning space. Each session presents interesting topics that directly relate to real-life cases I encounter in the hospital wards and operating theatre.”



LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A STRONG HEALTHCARE FORCE



What I Have Learned in my Three Years with KBNF

“I have been with the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation (KBNF) for three years now, and I am truly grateful to be part of this unique and caring family.

My experience has been one of love, care, and kindness—not just toward our patients, but also among the nurses, doctors, and every member of our team.

Being part of KBNF, I have witnessed incredible acts of generosity and compassion. I have seen team members personally cover the cost of laboratory tests for patients who could not afford them, even though the surgeries themselves were free. Every patient receives not only medical care but also medications, bedside support, and unwavering encouragement from the KBNF visiting team. One person I deeply admire is Marj—her selflessness is inspiring. I have watched her sit by patients’

bedsides, offering words of hope, ensuring they are comfortable, and even working night shifts in the ICU just to monitor their progress.

One of my most memorable experiences has been seeing patients in Liberia, who would otherwise have had no access to neurosurgical care, come forward in large numbers to receive treatment through KBNF. The hope on their faces is something I will never forget. What touches my heart the most is watching post-operative spine patients, who once struggled to walk, return for follow-ups—no longer needing walkers or wheelchairs, smiling, and sharing how well they are doing.

KBNF has had a profound impact on neurosurgery in Liberia and has also transformed my own perspective on life. It has shaped me into a leader, strengthened my sense of responsibility, and, most importantly, taught me the power of spreading love wherever I go.”

—Teinein N. Bernard, Registered Nurse, Neurosurgery (KBNF-Liberia)



Gaining Experience and Independence

“As a member of KBNF and a participant in the online sessions ... I learned new nursing procedures, specifically in managing neuro-surgical patients from the recovery room to the general ward. I gained valuable experience working with people from different countries. The online learning was invaluable, especially since I was one of the presenters, which allowed me to gain more knowledge on hydrocephalus.

The online sessions were also very educational, as many presenters taught on various topics and practices that have made me more independent in the field of nursing.”

—Meshach Wailah, Registered Nurse, Liberia



Upholding Professional Standards Through Ongoing Training

“Since KBNF’s presence in Liberia, so much has changed in the delivery of professional surgical and medical services. The availability of high-quality neurosurgical care has been a tremendous relief—especially for those who could never afford treatment abroad and can now receive care within the country.

Beyond providing medical services, KBNF has upheld professional standards through continuous training. Before each mission, both new and returning health care professionals receive hands-on education in surgical, medical, and rehabilitative care, ensuring that patients receive the best possible treatment.

The online presentations through WANNN, led by experts, have also been invaluable, keeping us updated on the latest methods in patient care. In rehabilitation, post-surgical recovery is critical, and we begin treatment while patients are still admitted, continuing their care after discharge. This ensures the best outcomes for our patients.”

—Samuel Hennings, Physical Therapist, Liberia

THE KORLE-BU NEUROSCIENCE CLUB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (UBC)

STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (UBC) INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING THE ENHANCEMENT OF NEUROLOGICAL CARE AND EDUCATION GLOBALLY RECENTLY REACTIVATED A CLUB ASSOCIATED WITH THE KORLE-BU NEUROSCIENCE FOUNDATION, CALLED THE KORLE-BU NEUROSCIENCE CLUB (KBNC).

Students are involved with volunteering, fundraising, research initiatives, and more.



VOLUNTEERING

One of KBNC’s major aims is to build relationships between the UBC student population and KBNF. KBNC’s volunteering program connects students with volunteer sessions hosted at the warehouse, expanding the volunteer network and facilitating the continued transport of shipments. Through these efforts, student volunteers are able to build a sense of community with like-minded students while making a tangible impact on the accessibility of healthcare materials in West Africa.

EVENTS

KBNC’s Events Team organizes a variety of local events that aim to engage the UBC student body with the foundation’s global initiatives and spark passion for neuroscience in healthcare. In Fall 2024, the club hosted a series of three educational events featuring a variety of professionals in various neuroscience disciplines across the globe. From Prof. Christopher Honey and Dr. Jocelyne Lapointe’s insights into neurosurgery and neuroradiology, to Dr. Harry Akoto and Yahya Nije’s perspective on surgical care in Ghana and The Gambia, and finally, Chris Lamb and Beverley Larssen’s expertise in neurorehabilitation, these events reached and inspired over 150 attendees collectively.

FOLIC ACID

In addition to KBNC’s local activities, the KBNC Research Team supports the foundation’s education and training initiatives through collaboration with members of KBNF’s global network. **In 2024, the Research Team developed an educational pamphlet addressing the importance of folic acid in preventing spina bifida during pregnancy.** This resource is designed to provide accessible education for pregnant women and empower healthcare professionals to communicate this information to patients, with hopes of contributing to better maternal and infant health outcomes. The most crucial aspect of this project is the relationships it has fostered across the globe, most notably the partnership between KBNC and collaborators located in Liberia. In 2025, medical students from the KBNF club in Liberia are collecting feedback on the comprehensibility of the pamphlets through the organization of community workshops, with support from KBNC. The KBNC Research Team aims to analyze this feedback, as well as feedback collected from neurosurgical missions, in hopes of refining KBNF’s education and training initiatives to create a positive and sustainable impact.

KBNC and its dedicated members are eager to grow their organization at UBC and across global networks, aiming to provide continual support for the foundation and its initiatives.

EVERYONE DESERVES BETTER NEUROLOGICAL CARE.

—Simrut Kurry, President of the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Club at UBC (UBC-KBNC)

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

LEON PESKLEVITS

IT'S A GOOD CAUSE.
I'VE BEEN THERE.
I SEE THE GOOD IT DOES.

—Leon Pesklevits, KBNF Volunteer



Leon is a quiet legend at our Canadian warehouse. He usually volunteers on Mondays, showing up with his van and carpenter tools to do whatever needs to be done.

Leon first heard about the Korle-Bu Neuroscience Foundation (KBNF) from his longtime friends, KBNF Board Member Darren Schemmer and Heather Johnson. Volunteering is part of Leon’s ethos, so when he was finishing up working on a housing project for Syrian refugees, he was looking for a new opportunity to give back.

In November 2021, Leon went to Liberia as part of our Fall Neurosurgical Advancement Trip. He saw the challenges of the environment, including the humidity, as well as the importance of shipping valuable medical equipment in as safe a manner as possible. When Leon returned to Canada, he started building crates for the medical equipment we send.

Leon loves that he gets to use his skills and give back in a meaningful way. “It’s worthwhile work,” he says. “We repurpose high end equipment that would otherwise end up in the landfill.” He also likes the social aspect of volunteering, meeting people he might not otherwise encounter. At the same time, he gets to learn new things, like learning about medical equipment and supplies.

Recently, Leon built crates for several incubators that had been donated. These incubators were worth hundreds of thousands of dollars and crating each one of them carefully meant the equipment arrived safely in West Africa. “If you can do something that saves a life or saves a baby, it’s worth it,” Leon says.

THE VALUE OF GIVING BACK WHILE USING YOUR SKILLS

4,780

VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2024
WITH THE HELP OF ...



234

VOLUNTEERS IN 2024
WHICH IS APPROX. A VALUE OF ...

\$95,600

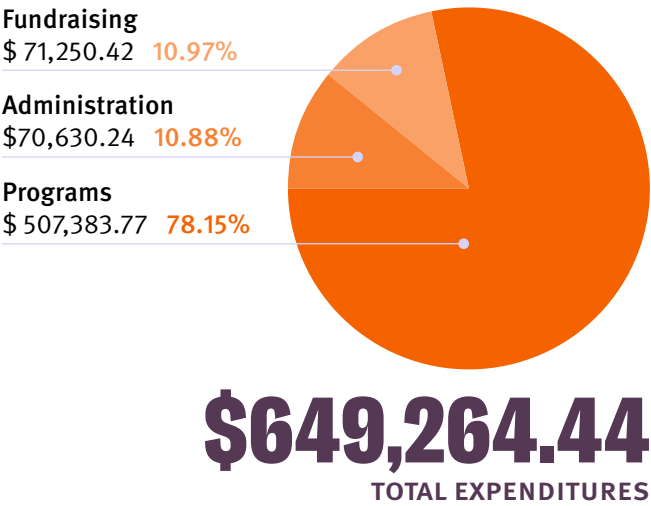
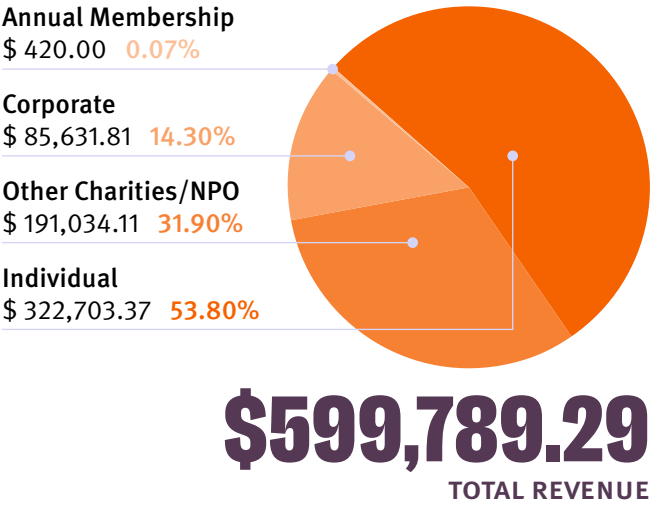


FINANCIALS & SUPPORT

Income Statement 01/01/2024 to 12/31/2024

Balance Sheet As at 12/31/2024

Consolidated Budget 2025



REVENUE	
Annual Membership	\$ 420.00
Donations - Individual	\$ 322,703.37
Donations - Corporate	\$ 85,631.81
Donations - Other Charities/NPO’s	\$ 191,034.11
Total Revenue	\$ 599,789.29

EXPENSES	
Accounting & Legal Fees	\$ 9,231.84
Advertising & Promotions	\$ 214.56
Bank Charges	\$ 4,868.96
Consulting - Admin	\$ 6,000.00
Fees - Credit Card	\$ 5,172.27
Fees - Paypal	\$ 31.07
Foreign Exchange	\$ 181.41
Fuel Expense	\$ 1,318.17
Insurance	\$ 2,698.47
Internet/Electricity	\$ 823.89
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 2,660.60
Meeting - Core Program	\$ 1,830.10
Media & Marketing	\$ 14,786.55
Memberships/Fees	\$ 5,723.86
Office Expenses	\$ 4.98
Postage, Printing & Copying	\$ 2,022.44
Projects/Missions Expenses	\$ 127,962.88
Medication for Missions	\$ 10,089.48
Shipping Charges	\$ 78,757.05
Special Event Expenses	\$ 7,531.25
Subcontractor/Nurse Assistants	\$ 346.63
Supplies - Office Admin	\$ 1,060.07
Supplies - Office Core Program	\$ 241.14
Technology	\$ 563.70
Travel & Car Rental - Core Program	\$ 2,100.98
Warehouse Expenses	\$ 11,614.04
Warehouse Rent	\$ 167,655.62
Wages & Salaries - Programs	\$ 97,681.09
Wages & Salaries - Admin	\$ 17,681.09
Wages & Salaries - Fundraising	\$ 57,681.09
El Expense	\$ 3,616.23
CPP Expense	\$ 6,241.60
WCB Expense	\$ 871.32
Total Expenses	\$ 649,264.44

NET INCOME	\$ -49,475.15
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ASSETS	
Current Assets	
CAD Accounts	\$ 16,931.80
USD Accounts	\$ 26,723.13
LRD Account	\$ 20.61
Petty Cash	\$ 745.60
GST Recoverable	\$ 4,884.55
Deposit on New Warehouse	\$ 0.00
Deposit for Rented Warehouse	\$ 0.00
Donation Accruals	\$ 21,585.81
Total Current Assets	\$ 70,891.50

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

TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 71,595.06
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LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ 7,393.97
TD Visa Payable	\$ 0.00
EI Payable	\$ 538.52
CPP Payable	\$ 1,083.90
Income Tax Payable	\$ 1,549.69
Receiver General Payable	\$ 3,172.11
GST Payable	\$ 0.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 10,566.08

TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 10,566.08
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Long Term Liabilities	
Warehouse Hold (Rick Diamond)	\$ 0.00
To/Fm Korle Bu Neuroscience Found	\$ 0.00
To/Fm KBNF Liberia	\$ 0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	\$ 0.00

EQUITY	
Retained Earnings	
Retained Earnings - Previous Year	\$ 110,504.13
Current Earnings	\$ -49,475.15
Total Retained Earnings	\$ 61,028.98

TOTAL EQUITY	\$ 61,028.98
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 71,595.06
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*All significant intercompany amounts have been removed

REVENUE	
Annual Membership	\$ 1,500.00
Donations - Individual	\$ 375,000.00
Donations - Corporate	\$ 90,000.00
Donations - Other Char./NPO’s	\$ 120,000.00
Other Receipts - General	\$ 3,184.00
Total Revenue	\$ 586,500.00

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	\$ 3,000.00
Warehouse Rent	\$ 123,000.00
Wages & Salaries	\$ 155,000.04
EI Expense	\$ 3,558.72
CPP Expense	\$ 6,217.80
WCB Expense	\$ 438.96
Total Expenses	\$ 581,534.52

NET INCOME	\$ 4,965.48
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Walk for the Bu



Christmas Celebration



Walk for the Bu



Christmas Celebration



Summer BBQ



Christmas Celebration

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We cannot do this work without you. There are many ways to get involved and make a meaningful impact.



VOLUNTEER

Your time, skills and expertise are so valuable to us. Join us during the week or on the monthly Volunteer Saturday to help fold linens, sort medical supplies, pack neonatal boxes or prepare medical equipment for the next shipment to West Africa. Connect with us to bring your class, club, sports team, small group, youth group or family and make a difference. Please contact Idelette McVicker, KBNF Volunteer and Communications Coordinator at idelette@kbnf.org. We'd love to hear from you!

SUPPORT KBNF FINANCIALLY

Become a KBNF Champion by joining our monthly donor program. Your consistent, faithful financial contributions bring strength to our organization. You can join for as little as \$5 a month. We also welcome one-time donations. Every gift makes an impact. **For more information, please see the back cover.**

JOIN A NEUROSURGICAL ADVANCEMENT TRIP

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 on kbnf.org to join one of our upcoming Neurosurgical Advancement Trips.

OUR PARTNERS

Medical Equipment and Supplies





Financial Partners







Farges Enterprises Ltd.

Partnerships



Dr. Augustine Ballah, Neurosurgeon, Liberia

Design of Annual Report:
Everett Ranni [rannibrand.com]