



BWINDI COMMUNITY HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 4 Issue 1

Feb 2017

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Our Vision

A healthy and productive community free from preventable disease and with excellent health services accessible to all.

Our Mission:

Serving Jesus Christ through giving holistic health care and life in all its fullness to the staff, patients, clients and visitors in the Hospital and community

Get in touch with us,

Communications Department
 Bwindi Community Hospital
 P.O Box 58, Kanungu, Uganda.
 Email; bwindicommunityhospital@gmail.com
www.bwindihospital.com
 + 256 (0) 392880242 or
 +256 (0) 703342891

BCH Receives Sustainable Development Award

Bwindi Community Hospital (Bwindi) has been recognized as one of the top 50 Sustainable Development Agencies in Uganda for 2017!

A countrywide survey was done to determine the Top 50 greatest agencies from both public and private sector which have made tangible contribution towards social economic transformation of Uganda. Bwindi was nominated and voted for by the people in appreciation of her contribution towards development of Uganda.

Along with the other winners, Bwindi will be included in the Uganda Sustainable Development Fact Book and will also be highlighted in the

2017 Uganda Sustainable Development Agencies Documentary and Video outlining the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and The Uganda TOP 50 Sustainable Development Agencies.

Dr. Birungi Mutahunga Rwamatware, Executive Director Bwindi Community Hospital, has been invited to the Uganda Sustainable Development Roundtable and Dinner later this year, and he is looking forward to attend, if his schedule allows.

Uganda Nursing School Bwindi students shine at UCU

Academic excellence proved itself once again when all the twelve Uganda Nursing School Bwindi (UNSB) diploma students graduated in Nursing Sciences from Uganda Christian University (UCU), Mukono.

The twelve students were among those who were awarded the diploma in Nursing Sciences on 21st October 2016 from the affiliate schools of UCU, at the Uganda Christian University Mukono Main Campus in the New Recreation Sports grounds.

Ezaturu Lucy was the top student among the UNSB diploma students and was among the 44 Uganda Christian University Students that excelled with first class honors.

Over 1,593 students graduated in different fields at the function; and the guest of honor for the graduation ceremony was Dr. Os Guinness, an author and social critic.



UNSB students graduate at UCU

you can follow the progress of Uganda Nursing School Bwindi at www.unsbwindi.ac.ug.



www.bwindihospital.com



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The growing partnership with “Watsi”

For several years, BCH has partnered with “Watsi”, a US-based charity



which supports surgeries for the most needy in several hospitals around the world (www.watsi.org). Watsi raises donations through a crowd-funding platform. Watsi focuses on high-impact, low-cost treatments that have a high likelihood of returning some-

one to a healthy, productive life. For example, hernia surgery can help someone return to work or fistula surgery can help a woman live without shame.

Watsi began partnering with BCH in May 2013 and the program has grown dramatically since then. In 2013, only a handful of patients were supported by Watsi. In 2016, that figure jumped to 341! The number of treatments covered by Watsi at BCH has grown from eight to twenty-five. Watsi also assisted patients in the Orthopedic, Surgical, and Fistula Camps in 2016 and is on-track to do so in 2017.

Three-day-old Phiona is one of the patients Watsi helped in 2016. She was referred to BCH because the health facility where she was born could not treat her genu recurvatum, or knee hyperextension. She needed serial casting to correct the knee joint and allow the ligaments and muscles to realign. Watsi covered the

treatment. Phiona will now be able to run and play with the other children. Thank you Watsi.



Watsi tries to visit its partner hospitals once a year and in December 2016, Watsi staff visited BCH. They stayed at the hospital’s Guest House and shared meals with staff. The Watsi staff were very impressed with BCH and want to continue and even grow the partnership in the future. The hospital and the patients are very grateful.

Work Therapy For Batwa Alcoholic Members

At the request of local Batwa Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) members, Bwindi Psychiatric Clinical Officer, KuuleYusufu, volunteer UK psychiatrist Dr. Stuart d’Arch Smith, and Batwa Development Program missionary, Paul Thomas, collaborated to develop a sustainable income pilot project for the Batwa.

Dr. Stuart and Kuule developed the concept for the project in 2016 and Stuart started fundraising in the UK.

He eventually raised about \$3000 as seed money. Paul applied for an additional grant from the Bonhomme Presbyterian Church’s “Tipping Point” grants program in the US and was awarded an additional \$7000.

This money will be used to start a project raising pigs and chickens on a piece of land loaned by the hospital. Ground breaking was on January 25th, 2017.

Twenty-one men and women from the local Batwa AA community are participating in the project, helping

to build the pens and learning animal husbandry. They are hoping the pilot project, which is expected to run about two years, will be able to be reproduced in their villages.



Ground breaking for piggy project





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Sixth Successful camp at BCH

A successful Fistula Camp was again held at Bwindi Community Hospital in October 2016. Twenty-seven women from across Uganda received life-saving surgery. This time the hospital made nationwide publicity bringing more than half of the women from as far as 1000km away.

For the first time, the camp was supported not only by our generous Swiss partners, Dr. Verena and her team, but also by our partner Watsi, a US-based charity. Watsi covered the cost of medical for each patient. We are eternally grateful for the support of these partners!

All the fistula patients were housed in our new premium ward, with private rooms and private bathrooms. As the



Julia and Mark at the official opening of premium ward

women healed from their surgeries, they were also able to heal from the emotional wounds they had been living with because of their fistulas.

The premium ward was a place of sanctuary for these women and we thank the donors, Julia Amaral and Mark Strate for their generosity. Julia's desire was that this beautiful new facility be used for the benefit

of women and we are happy to say that it has and will continue to be! We would like to highlight the story of one of our patients, Doreen, who suffered for two years from both vesicovaginal and anorectal fistulas, and her remarkable recovery.

Doreen remembers the horrible last year with anxiety and despondency. After a prolonged, obstructed labor two years ago, Doreen delivered vaginally but she recalls a tear because her baby was big; weighing 4.4kgs. With stitches, Doreen was discharged from hospital.

Two weeks later, she was incontinent and leaking stool. She went to a hospital and received drugs that seemed to help and she returned to work. Over the next year, however, the problem increased and it was discovered that she had a fistula. In the hands of a retired doctor, Doreen underwent four surgeries to repair the damage but instead it worsened. Heartbroken, her family asked for her to be referred to another hospital. Because of the fistulas, she not only could no longer work and her husband divorced her. She returned home to live with her parents.

After referral at a hospital in Kampala, Doreen was given a colostomy to prevent further damage to her vaginal area and told to return in three months for surgery. Just before she was due for the operation, a doctor advised her about the fistula camp at BCH where she could be treated.

Given that her family had already spent their savings on her previous treatments, they were overjoyed to learn about the camp.



Doreen, one of the fistula patients after being discharged

At Bwindi, Doreen underwent two operations. Both her fistulas were repaired successfully. For three months she healed at the hospital, supported by skilled staff. She is now home and is looking forward to a new life without isolation and shame. She may yet again marry. The best news is that she can have more children if she wants!

Many women in Uganda suffer from fistula. From the cries of these women, Bwindi runs camps to repair such conditions. A team of committed surgeons worked tirelessly to complete the operations. "We are grateful to the doctors and nurses here at Bwindi for the selfless service they have offered to us. At our homes, it is very different" says one of the camp patients. BCH is able to offer obstetric care to the entire country.





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My Journey To Bwindi

Long-time Communications Team Lead, Aida Nantege, left BCH in September, 2016. Her contributions to the hospital were many and she will be much missed. After reviewing approximately forty applications for her position, the hospital made an offer to the top candidate, Rehma Nakanjako. Here is her story.

“Giving hope to a needy mother and child has always been my aspiration. I have been saddened to hear about mothers and children who die because they cannot access health services and my heart always tore out in pain. However, I was never in a position to help. Then I heard about a hospital near the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest that was looking for a Communications officer. This was the beginning of my journey to Bwindi Community Hospital.

I checked the hospital website, read about its services, foundation, and achievements. I thought to myself; this must be a call from God because besides being a job in my field, I would be able to contribute to a cause I believed in. I sent in an application and was so happy when I learned that I had been shortlisted for an interview!

The journey to the hospital took a full night on a bus to for an interview the next day. Despite some challenges along the way, we arrived on time. I knew the journey was worth while when on my arrival, I was greeted by the sight of a number of elderly women finding excellent health services at the hospital.

Here I am today, an employee in the www.unsbwindi.ac.ug

hospital Communications Department, looking forward to helping the hospital realise her vision. I am proud to be part of a selfless team that sees the communities receive holistic health services and become free from preventable diseases!”

First Batwa Pygmy enrolls at UNSB

For the first time in its existence, Uganda Nursing School Bwindi has admitted a Batwa pygmy. Godfrey Mugarura reported to UNSB on 14th November 2016 becoming the first mutwa to enroll for certificate in Nursing. This makes UNSB the first Health training institution in Uganda to enroll one of the Batwa pygmys.

Mugarura is looking forward to becoming a nurse. He says, “I want to



Mugarura at UNSB

become a health worker so that I can help my people”

Since time immemorial, the Batwa pygmys of Bwindi impenetrable forest lived on only natural raw foods.

Their health was mainly supported by the herbs drawn from the forest since 2003. Making them appreciate modern medicine has been a problem. HIV has become very prevalent among them and also some communicable preventable diseases.

UNSB is one of the few institutions which have joined the struggle to support the pygmys so as to train their own who would in turn help the rest in their villages.

How you can support our work by making a tax deductible donation to our US charities;

The Kellermann Foundation
P.O. Box 832809
Richardson, TX 75083-2809
www.kellermannfoundation.org

Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy
<http://www.akphilanthropy.org>
Please earmark the donations for use at Bwindi Community Hospital.

OR make a direct transfer to our bank accounts in Uganda with the following details:

Account Name: **Bwindi Community Hospital**
Bank: Stanbic
Branch: Kihhi
Account Number: 9030008175194
Sort Code: 045360
Swift Code: SBICUGKX

Local Currency account
Bank: Stanbic
Branch: Kihhi
Account Name: Bwindi Community Hospital
Account Number: 9030006395480
Sort Code: 040147
Swift Code: SBICUGKX

