



**ASSOCIATION OF SURGEONS
OF UGANDA**

Celebrating Women Surgeons in Uganda

**International
Women's Day 2021**



The most influential women surgeons in Uganda.

Women in Uganda are represented in all branches of surgery and at all career stages underscoring the fact that women do compete favorably with men to achieve a great education, work hard and conduct extensive research to become pioneers in surgery and other fields of science.

This International women's day of 2021, the Association of Surgeons (ASOU) of Uganda recognizes and shines a spotlight on the unsung accomplishments of Uganda's women in surgery. Of all the women in surgery in Uganda who have passed through the corridors of hospitals, Emergency Rooms, and Operating Theatres, the ones listed are among the most noteworthy still alive to date.



H.E Dr. Wandira Kazibwe Speciosa

Her Excellency Dr. Wandira, Kazibwe Speciosa is the first Ugandan Woman Surgeon, researcher, and Global Health and Population Expert. She holds a Masters of Medicine in Surgery from Makerere University and a Doctor of Science in Global Health and Population from the Harvard T.H Chan School of Public Health

among other numerous qualifications.

She is a Fellow of the College of Surgeons, East Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA), a valued member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda (ASOU), a Member of the Women Doctors Association, and a Member of Uganda Medical Association.

She served as Executive Vice President of the Republic of Uganda for nine years, making her the first woman in Africa to hold such a position. She also held various Cabinet portfolios; was a Member of Uganda's Parliament for 17 years; and, Member of the Constituent Assembly that drafted Uganda's 1995 Constitution.

She has served on various local, regional, and international Boards and Commissions and led an African Union National Elections Monitoring Mission to Liberia. She was co-Chair of an international Inter-Academy Council Panel that drafted a report on Realizing the Promise and Potential of African Agriculture.

She has been Advisor on Special Initiatives to the President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). As the founder President of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development of the African Union, she mobilized and advocated for the active involvement of women in Africa's leadership, peace and development initiatives.

Currently, Dr. Wandira is mentoring health planners in Uganda, at National and Local government levels on the use of Health Financing as a Catalyst for Health Reforms and advocating for support to Local Governments and Communities to start Community Social Security Schemes. She is on the African Union Panel of the Wise and Co-Chair of FEMWISE-AFRICA; and a Founder Board member of the Coalition for Dialogue on Africa (CODA).

A believer in the use of evidence for policy, stewardship, and effective community/stakeholder engagement as a necessary avenue for the socio-economic transformation of Africa, Dr. Wandira is not afraid of thinking outside the box and acting on what is correct, an attribute that has earned her the reputation of a 'trailblazer'.

She is also the Senior Presidential Advisor to the President of the Republic of Uganda responsible for policy analysis and generation/evaluation of evidence for population health and productivity.



Dr. Birabwa Male Doreen

Dr. Birabwa-Male Doreen is a distinguished Senior Consultant Pediatric Surgeon, thought leader, and mentor.

She graduated from Makerere University as a general surgeon and went ahead to pursue Pediatric surgery at the University of London.

She holds a Masters of Business administration from the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute and trained in Health Systems Management at Galilee College in Israel.

She spent a 34-year dedicated public service at Mulago National Referral Hospital scaling the ranks to the number two position as Deputy Executive Director, a position she held for 9 years.

She is the first practicing woman surgeon in Uganda and is best known for her uncompromising dedication to perfection.

She is a founding member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda and the College of Surgeons East, Central, and Southern Africa.

Dr. Birabwa is determined to make pediatric surgery accessible to all and in her pursuit of this noble cause, she was instrumental in the establishment of the Pediatric Surgical Unit of Mulago National Referral Hospital.

The unit now offers fellowship training in pediatric surgery. She is also committed to being a role model and has mentored several surgical trainees who have advanced as exceptional pediatric surgeons.

She has a proven track record

of public administration with numerous achievements including the expansion of the Mulago Hospital complex birthing new specialized hospitals that were established and constructed during her tenure. Mulago National Specialized Hospital, Mulago Specialized Women, and Neonatal Hospital, Kiruddu, and Kawempe National Referral Hospitals were all part of Mulago Hospital Complex.

In March 2020 she was named the Deputy Chief Executive Officer/ Medical Director of the Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services for people with disabilities in Uganda (CoRSU), a specialized hospital established as a Non-Governmental Organisation that provides preventive, curative, and rehabilitation services with a major focus on children.

She is also a talented entrepreneur having co-founded the Surgeons Plaza, an upscale specialist surgical hospital located in Kampala, Uganda.

She is happily married with four grown children and three grandchildren.



Dr. Fualal Jane Odubu

Dr. Fualal Jane Odubu is a first-rate Breast and Endocrine Surgeon, invaluable leader and neoteric educator serving as the Vice President of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa and Patron Women in Surgery Africa (WiSA). She is also the first woman, former President of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda.

She holds Masters of Medicine in General Surgery of Makerere University and a Fellowship of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa. She also trained in Health Leadership and Management. She is a

Member, International Association of Endocrine Surgery and the International Surgical Society.

She is a Senior Consultant Surgeon at Mulago National Specialized Hospital where she pioneered the Endocrine Surgery Unit.

She leads a team of venturous Surgeons and Anesthesiologists that has successfully operated on over 40 patients with pheochromocytoma, a number not attained in any one unit in a similar time frame in East Africa.

In resource limited settings such as district hospitals and during surgical camps, Dr. Fualal advocates and has popularized the performance of thyroidectomy under local anesthesia a technique she has demonstrated to be safe, well tolerated and cost effective having operated on over a thousand patients.

She is deeply involved in the development of the future generations of Breast and Endocrine surgeons.

Having merged the Endocrine Surgery and the Breast surgery units of Mulago Hospital, She started training and examining surgical trainees and even proceeded to design the

Curriculum for the Fellowship in Breast and Endocrine Surgery of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa.

Dr. Fualal serves as the Chairperson Uganda Medical Board, a body that guides the Government on Healthcare expenditure for public servants; a Member of the University Council of Kampala International University; Honorary Lecturer Kampala International University; Chairperson Theatre Committee Team, Mulago National Specialized Hospital; Patron and Mentor Makerere Students Surgical Society; Chairperson Executive Council, St. Joseph's Chaplaincy Mulago.

She continually gives back to the community and her numerous visits to the prisons earned her a Community Service Award from the Rotary Club of Portbell. She is also a proud recipient of the Independence Medal, a Presidential Award from the Uganda Government.

She was also named a Model of Excellence by the Forum for African Women Educationalist – Uganda (FAWE – Uganda).

Over the weekend, Dr. Fualal joins the St. Mary's Choir of St. Joseph's Chaplaincy to worship God.



Dr. Kobusingye Chifefe Olive

Dr. Kobusingye Chifefe Olive is a celebrated trauma surgeon both in Uganda and internationally, a writer, researcher, and pioneer of innovations.

She is known for her trailblazing work in injury prevention.

She is the first Ugandan Injury epidemiologist, founder of the Injury Control Center Uganda, and the Injury Prevention System for Africa.

She also started the first trauma

registry in sub-Saharan Africa.

She is the Head, Trauma Injury and Disability Unit at Makerere University, School of Public Health where she serves as a Senior Research fellow.

She serves as the Board Chair of the Road Traffic Injury Research Network, an international agency working to improve road safety through research with a focus on Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC).

She is also a Member World Bank's Global Safety Facility

Technical Advisory Panel and a Distinguished Fellow of the George Institute of Global Health, Sydney Australia.

The list of her accomplishments in this area is long and impressive and she is not yet done. She continues to take indefatigable actions to strengthen the fields of emergency trauma care, road safety, access to health care, emergency medical services, health and human rights, injury epidemiology, and prevention in low- and middle-income countries.

She has so far succeeded in introducing the teaching of injury epidemiology and prevention at Makerere University school of public health.

“My most innovative academic undertaking,” she says, “was the development of the Kampala Trauma Score (KTS). Before the introduction of this injury severity measurement tool, many clinicians in Africa were obliged to use sophisticated scores such as the Revised Trauma Score, or the Injury Severity Score, whose consistent use was often not feasible in low-income settings.

As a result, most clinicians used no severity measurement, except for the Glasgow Coma Score, which only relates to neurological integrity and function. The Kampala Trauma Score has provided an easily adapted score for clinicians and researchers.”

She holds a Masters of Medicine in Surgery from Makerere University, a Masters in Public Health from the State University of New York, Albany, a Master of Science in clinical tropical Medicine from the University of London at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

She is a Fellow of the College Surgeons, East, Central and southern Africa, and a valued member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda.

She is a passionate human rights champion and serves as a Board member of the International Society of Human Rights - East African Chapter.

She is a prolific researcher having authored and co-authored more than 60 papers in peer-reviewed journals and as of February 2021 has been cited 25,000 times.

She also serves as a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion.

She is the author of numerous books among which the Patient (Author House UK) and The Correct Line? Uganda under Museveni (Author House UK).

She is a wife and a mother of two daughters and enjoys hiking and mountain climbing.



Dr. Nassanga Rosemary

Dr. Nassanga Rosemary is an illustrious Senior Consultant Urologist, Pioneer, and patient advocate.

Born to two teachers she had to attend six primary schools due to work transfers of her parents. Her leadership skills were evident very early in her life serving as a primary school prefect and a Minister of Education in her secondary school.

She attended Makerere University for her undergraduate and graduate training. She later pursued a Master of Science in Urology at Tumaini

University in Moshi Tanzania becoming the first woman urologist in East Africa. Urology, the specialty she chose, is the branch of medicine that focuses on both the male and female urinary tract but exclusively on the male reproductive organs and male fertility.

She went to Brighton Royal County Hospital for practical surgical training in Urology with the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

She spent an 18 years career at Mulago National Referral Hospital, 10 of which she worked as a Senior Consultant Urologist. Until this day she performs surgery with exquisite perfection and especially enjoys operating on children born with hypospadias.

She transformed the surgical unit of Nsambya hospital while serving as its Head and is credited with the pioneering of gastrointestinal tract endoscopy and Endourology within the unit.

She is dedicated to the development of the health workforce, an educator, and an advocate of fellowship training. She is the Country Urology COSECSA Program Coordinator in Uganda and an Examiner of COSECSA in Urology. She also Chairs the Training and Human Resource

Development Committee of Mulago National Referral Hospital.

She served on the Executive Committee of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda (ASOU) for more than 10 years, serving as president of the association between 2007-2009.

She is a founding member of the Urological Association of Uganda and currently serves on its executive committee as the Secretary. She also serves on the board of directors of the surgeons plaza, a private specialist surgical Hospital in Kampala.

As a patient advocate, she speaks out for children with hypospadias, a male birth defect in which the opening of the tube (urethra) that carries urine from the body develops abnormally on the underside of the male reproductive organ.

To quote Isaac Newton, "if I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of others," Dr. Nassanga attributes her creativity, innovation, and leadership prowess to mentors including Dr. Birabwa Doreen Male, Professor Steven C. Kijjambu, Professor Ignatius Kakande, Dr. Fred Mutyaba and the late G.W.S Kanya underscoring the importance of mentorship in surgical practice.



Dr. Olivia Kituuka

Dr. Kituuka Olivia is a gifted Hepatopancreaticobiliary (HPB) surgeon, teacher, clinical researcher, and mentor to students at Makerere University College of Health sciences. She is a lecturer in the Department of Surgery and a practicing surgeon in Mulago National Specialized Hospital.

She is credited with the founding of the HPB unit and is currently the Head of the same.

Dr. Kituuka completed her postgraduate training at Makerere University after which she pursued Fellowships in General, Laparoscopic, and HBP surgery. She is a Fellow of the College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa (COSECSA). She is also a Ph.D. fellow of Bioethics.

She pioneered the use of endoscopy as an intervention tool, laparoscopic surgery, and surgery on the pancreas in Uganda.

In addition to her remarkable clinical prowess, she is an accomplished leader having previously served as President of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda, Chair Department of Surgery, Makerere University College of Health Sciences (MakChs) among other responsibilities.

She was instrumental in setting up the surgical skills laboratory at Makerere University.

She currently serves as the secretary to the board of COSECSA in Uganda.

She is passionate about research in surgical healthcare and is currently serves as Vice-Chair, Department of Surgery Research Committee, and is a member of the Uganda Cancer Institute Research Ethics Committee (UCIREC).

She has performed numerous surgeries in the underserved communities during surgical camps organized by the Association of Surgeons of Uganda (ASOU) and has been engaged in several charity drives with Sanyu Babies Home.





**Dr. Namuyuga Miriose
Wamukolo**

Dr. Namuyuga Miriose Wamukolo is a seasoned Senior Consultant General Surgeon, Community Leader, and Palliative Care Specialist.

Raised from a humble background in Mayuge District in Eastern Uganda, she prevailed against all odds to become one of the most influential women surgeons in Uganda. In her primary education, she attended a boys school, the only one in her vicinity that was providing quality education. She attributes her admission into the school to her talent in singing.

She excelled in her primary, secondary and university education ultimately graduating from Makerere University as a Doctor and later on as a Surgeon. She also trained in palliative care and public administration.

Dr. Namuyuga is an honorary Fellow of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa, a treasured member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda, and a Life Member of the Uganda Medical Association.

She is hardworking, devout, and honest, virtues that comprised the foundation of her upbringing. She performed tens of thousands of surgical operations during her long-term career and was a pioneer of essential surgical skills

laboratory in Mulago National Referral hospital.

She now serves as the leader of Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council for Busoga Region and Chair clergy wives of Central Buganda Diocese.

She is passionate about palliative care in Uganda and was instrumental in the establishment of Hospice Jinja as well as the palliative care Unit of Jinja Regional Referral Hospital in Eastern Uganda.

She is an advocate for the elderly and has pioneered the 60 plus community health project, an organization that delivers medical services to the elderly in the comfort of their homes.

A surgeon of indomitable energy, she is a venerable leader in her community in Eastern Uganda where she resides with her husband Reverend Canon Charles Wamukolo.

She is a proud mother of three children all of whom have graduated from universities.

Dr. Namuyuga is a symbol of hope and encouragement to girls from humble backgrounds hoping to break through the glass ceilings and become influential members of their communities.

Sr. Dr. Najjuka Justina Liliana Lucy Geraldine



Sr. Dr. Najjuka Justina Liliana Lucy Geraldine is a passionate consultant plastic and reconstructive surgeon, leader, and Roman Catholic nun belonging to the Little sisters of St. Francis in Nkokonjeru, Mukono district.

Born to a patrician family in Buganda, Dr. Najjuka is the firstborn of twenty-five children and the first African Roman Catholic nun to become a Surgeon in East and Central Africa.

She graduated from Makerere University with a Master of medicine in surgery and trained in plastics and reconstruction surgery at the Sri Ramachandra College in India. She also holds a Master in Health Service Management from Uganda Martyrs University.

Dr. Najjuka is a Fellow of the College of Surgeons, East Central and Southern Africa, a Fellow of the International College of Surgeons, a Member of Rotary Club International-Uganda, and a Proud Member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda.

She has vast experience working in both Uganda and neighboring countries.

She dedicated close to three decades of her long-term career to Civil service in various government hospitals across the country, and after retiring she now moves extensively across the country performing reconstructive surgeries on children born with cleft lip and cleft palates in underserved communities.

She is a Smile Train partner and project manager of the surgical center Smile Train Mbarara. Smile Train is an international organization that seeks to transform the lives of children born with cleft lip and cleft palates by offering free reconstructive surgeries especially to those who have no place else to turn.

She is credited with transforming St. Francis Hospital in Nkokonjeru from a maternity center into a Hospital while serving as a Medical Superintendent and also demonstrated distinguished service as the Head of the Surgery department of Nsambya Hospital, a private tertiary Referral Hospital in Kampala, and as Head plastics and reconstructive surgery at Mbarara Regional Referral Hospitals.

Outside the operating theater and beyond her religious assignments, Dr. Najjuka is a radio presenter on health-related issues at Radio Sapientia and has worked with the Buganda Kingdom on streamlining the same.

She enjoys singing and also has a particular interest in architecture, that is, the designing, construction, and renovation of buildings.



Dr. Sr Nassali Gorreti

Dr. Sr. Nassali Gorreti is a Consultant general surgeon, an established leader, and a mentor.

She holds a Master of Medicine in surgery of Makerere University and is a Fellow the College of Surgeons of East Central and Southern Africa.

She is best known for her devotion to championing causes that promote cancer control in Uganda. Her work in the fight against cancer started with the creation of a breast cancer screening clinic and later she led efforts to establish an oncology Department at St. Francis Hospital Nsambya to address the growing need for comprehensive cancer care in Uganda, a department she currently heads. Her role has now expanded to chairing the hospital's cancer program steering committee, the Rotary

- Nsambya Joint cancer committee.

She also pioneered diagnostic and therapeutic laparoscopic surgery in Nsambya Hospital.

Dr. Sr. Nassali is dedicated to teaching and mentoring surgical trainees in Uganda and played a key role in the founding of Mother Kevin Post Graduate Medical School – Uganda Martyrs University and here she serves as an Honorary Lecturer.

She also serves on the Health Committee of the association of religious in Uganda (ARU) and is the representative of the same on the board of the Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau (UCMB).

Dr. Sr. Nassali is an active member of the Association of surgeons of Uganda.



Rev. Sr. Dr Ajiko Mary Gorretti

Rev. Sr. Dr. Mary Margret Ajiko is an outstanding consultant surgeon, a teacher, and global surgery advocate.

She serves in Soroti Regional Referral Hospital, in Eastern

Uganda as a general surgeon attending to both adults and children with a wide range of surgical conditions.

Dr. Ajiko graduated from Makerere University with a Masters of Medicine in surgery and is currently a Ph.D. Fellow at Karolinska Institutet investigating pediatric surgical conditions in Uganda.

Dr. Ajiko is a Member of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa; a member of the Global Partners for Anaesthesia and Surgery (GPAS), an international body that is ensuring an improvement in surgery and anesthesia in Uganda; a member of the Canadian Coalition of Global Health Research; a Member of the Uganda Medical Association; a Member of Rotary Club International – Uganda, and an active Member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda.

She is a staunch supporter of global surgery initiatives and has nurtured international collaborations between Soroti Regional Referral Hospital and numerous academic institutions worldwide over among which is the University of British Columbia (UBC), University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), University

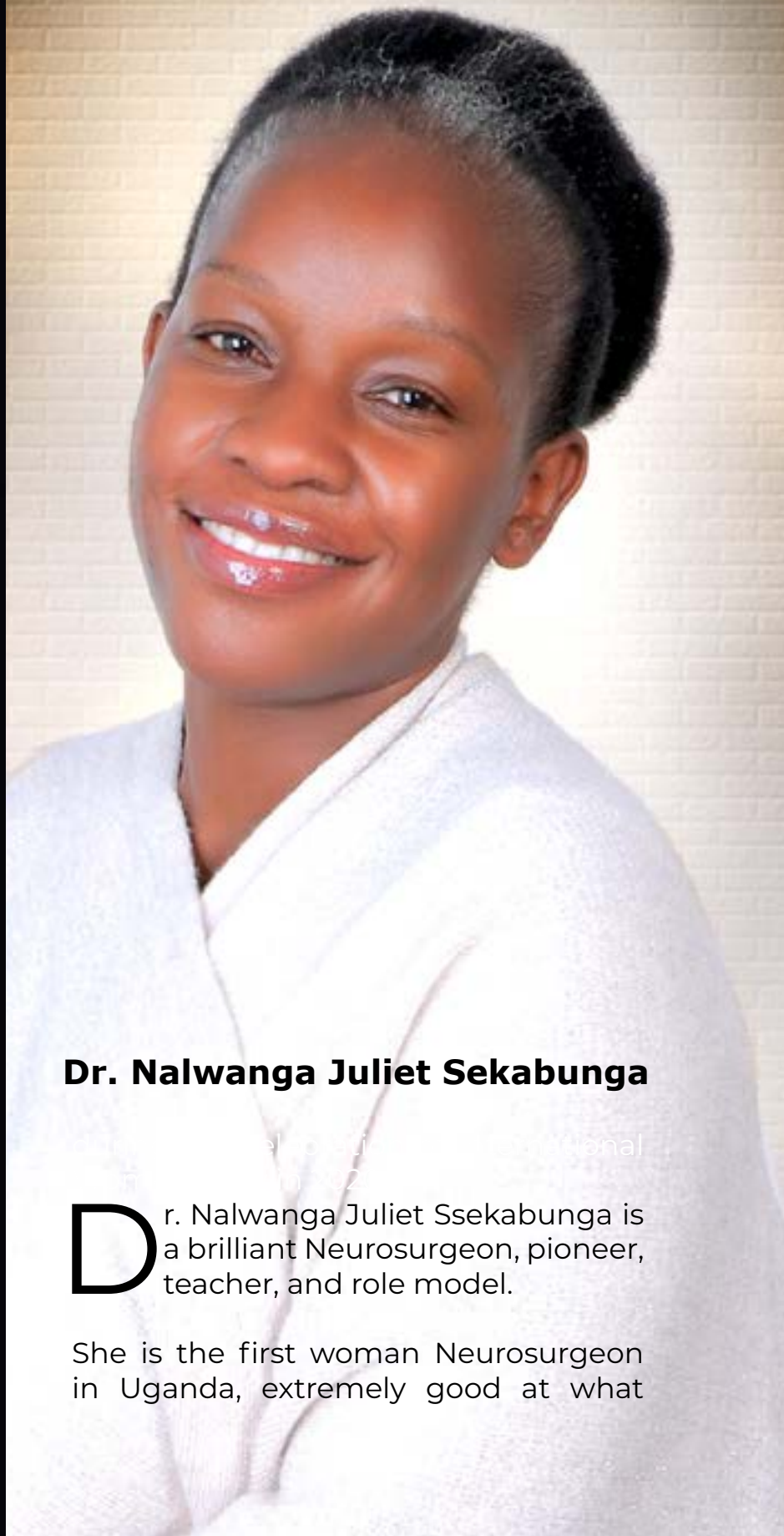
of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Karolinska Institutet (KI), and the Einstein University in the USA.

Every year Dr. Ajiko supervises summer students from these universities, guides them in the conduct of global health research which has led to numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals.

In recognition of her tireless partnership, collaboration, and commitment to clinical and academic surgery she was honored with an Adjunct University of British Columbia Faculty along with Dr. Kisa Phyllis and Dr. Nabukenya Mary, all Ugandans with remarkable contributions to Global Surgery.

She has a great interest in pediatric surgery. ***“Children,” she says, “are often left out of the operating theatre list. Is it because they cannot complain?”*** She has hence consistently organized pediatric surgical camps working with the association of Surgeons of Uganda reaching out to many children in the Teso subregion and beyond.

As a nun, she has dedicated her life to serving the poor and the needy and that earned her an award having been recognized as an outstanding lady in service in the Eastern region of Uganda



Dr. Nalwanga Juliet Sekabunga

Dr. Nalwanga Juliet Ssekabunga is a brilliant Neurosurgeon, pioneer, teacher, and role model.

She is the first woman Neurosurgeon in Uganda, extremely good at what

she does and hopes to continue her path of surgical excellence by pursuing her passion in Pediatric Neurosurgery. She is strongly driven by the need to cure children with brain tumors affording them a new lease on life. She works at Mulago National specialized hospital.

Dr. Nalwanga holds a Masters of Medicine in surgery from Mbarara University of Science and Technology, a Fellowship in Neurosurgery of the College of Surgeons East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA), and a Fellowship in Pediatric Neurosurgery from the University of Toronto-the hospital for sick children.

She is committed to training and mentoring medical students and surgical trainees and has lectured at Kampala International University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Makerere University, and the College of Surgeons East, Central and Southern Africa. In 2018 she was invited as an external examiner of COSECSA Neurosurgery fellows in Kigali, Rwanda

Dr. Nalwanga is a young investigator and has presented her research at national and international meetings and published in peer-reviewed journals during her fellowship training. In 2016, she was awarded the best poster presenter at the Congress of Africa Neurological Surgeons in Cape Town, South Africa.

She is an active member of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda.

She is a very proud mother and an inspiration to the generation of young girls with a dream of becoming brain surgeons.



ASSOCIATION OF SURGEONS OF UGANDA

