



“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”

—Socrates

Building a stronger Congo through higher education

April 2024 UPDATE

Growing computer science department at Congo Protestant University (UPC)



In response to strong demand, UPC established a computer science department in 2017—the Faculty of Information Sciences (FASI). That first year over 300 students enrolled!

More women joining the ranks

Every year, more and more women are applying. This year 30% of first-year students enrolled are women.

Students hail from many different educational backgrounds—ranging from math and chemistry to teaching and literature.

More applicants than space available

Last term, after culling from 700 applicants who took the entrance exam, FASI was only able to accept 396 new students due to space limitations.

Unfortunately, lack of funds for tuition have subsequently forced 47 of first-year students to become “inactive.” If they can afford tuition next year, they will be able to re-enroll in the program. On average 10–15% of new students must drop out due to financial pressures.

Highly motivated students

Very few fail scholastically. The attrition

rate lowers significantly as students advance in the program and can see a bright future at the end of the tunnel. As Prof. David Kutangila, Dean of FASI expressed, “They see a clear vision of the careers they will have upon completing their studies.”

Jobs aplenty await graduates

Employment is available from Congolese employers in such areas as telecommunications (Airtel, Vodacom and Orange), commercial banking (Rawbank and Equity) and government.

Continued on page 2

New fund for women in computer science

Education Congo offers scholarships in specific areas of study through “named funds” that pay out every year once they reach maturity at US\$25,000.

Our newest fund, “Sanichas IT,” has a starting balance of US\$5,000. It will provide scholarships to Congolese women in computer science. [Click here to help bring this fund to maturity.](#)

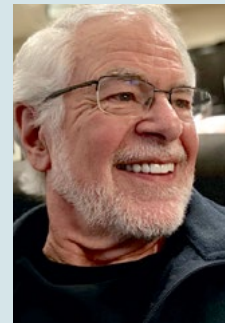
“Sanichas IT” is in memory of Evadne Sanichas, the daughter of a US Air Force pilot stationed in DRC 1965–1967. She attended the American School of

Kinshasa, then a few years later was in the elite group of women first admitted to Yale University, where she majored in Philosophy. She later attended law school in California, then was a fellow at Georgetown International Law Center.

Evadne spent 30 years as a US government trial attorney defending against large-scale lawsuits by government contractors.

She was a pioneer in using computer technology to track large volumes of information for complex litigation.

Words of support for Education Congo...



John B. Franz, PhD, author



“Supporting Education Congo is gifting individuals, families and a country with a brighter future. Why? Because education is transformative. Graduates have opportunities to earn, contribute and build a life that their peers lacking a degree simply have not. I have personally witnessed this truth over a lifetime of university teaching. Based on my experiences, including four years of living in DRC, I believe this is doubly true for the Congolese.”



UPC students attend AFMED conference

Last November, 20 UPC medical students were able to attend the University of Kinshasa AFMED conference thanks to financial support from Education Congo. The conference reunites medical scholars and practitioners who graduated from Congolese universities, but who have found work throughout the country and abroad.

This association of medical professionals informs, teaches and inspires our UPC students and their professors. In Congo, where the possibility of connections with medical professionals is scant, UPC medical students were able to hear and talk to their elders who have dedicated their lives to the pursuit of the biological sciences and service to those in need.

Elaine McManus joins our team



To enhance Education Congo's ability to reach out to you our donors in a more timely fashion and to effectively

manage our digital communication software we have added Elaine McManus to our team.

Fundraising results

Education Congo's December 2023 appeal for donations focused on "The Congo in your cellphone." It correlated our daily use of electronic equipment like cellphones and computers with the negative impact of mineral extraction on the Congolese.

In response to that reality, Education Congo partners with the Evangelical University of Africa (Bukavu) and the Protestant University of Congo (Kinshasa) to provide quality post-secondary education for Congolese students so they are equipped with the skill sets and expertise needed to help build a more just Congo that can reduce instability and exploitation.

We hoped to raise \$10,000 in December but supporters came through with over \$18,260.

Thank you!

Your support of this appeal was amazing, enabling us to significantly increase financial resources for the scholarship program. *Thank you for these gifts of hope for Congolese students!*

Growing computer science department *continued from page 1*

FASI partners with many employers to place students in internships. Special events and programs also facilitate matching students with employers.

FASI leadership and faculty

FASI is well staffed with two full-time professors and 28 more professors pulled from other departments at UPC as well as from other universities in Kinshasa. Four of these professors are women.

The Dean of FASI, Prof. David Kutangila, received his PhD in Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence at the University of Granada in Spain in 2005.

Outstanding investment in the future of the Congo

A Congolese benefactor has funded the construction of a new building for FASI. When it is complete, it will provide much-needed classroom space for 1st and 2nd year students.

More news to come

Another small team from Education Congo will be visiting UPC in June. Stay tuned for updates.



We at Education Congo extend heartfelt condolences to Margaret Loewen, our Board President, on the passing of her husband Bob Yoder this January. Bob provided his love, support and daily encouragement to Margaret in her volunteer work for Education Congo, her work advocating for more support by physicians for people with opioid use disorder and in writing her new book *The Picture of Addiction... It Can Happen to Anyone* (to be published in fall 2024).

Obituary: yoderculpfuneralhome.com/obituary/robert-yoder-jr



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