



## KNOW HOW TO PREVENT A STROKE

By Martin L. Mikaya, M.D.

In the last issue of this newsletter you learned the definition, symptoms and signs of a stroke. You also know what to do when you recognize that you or someone else may be having a stroke. Our next logical step is to discuss ways of preventing or at least reducing the risk of a stroke.

We can all help ourselves by recognizing and doing something about the following conditions in order to prevent a first stroke:

1. High blood pressure or hypertension is a leading cause of stroke. Therefore, have your blood pressure checked at least once a year. You can have it checked at your doctor's office, health fair, pharmacy, supermarket or at home with an automatic blood pressure machine. If the top number is consistently higher than 120 and the lower number higher than 80, see your doctor for advice. Your doctor may recommend a medication, diet changes and/or exercises to control your blood pressure.
2. Atrial fibrillation is a condition that causes an irregular heartbeat. It causes blood to become stagnant and clot on the walls of the chambers of the heart. Some of these clots can break off, get into the circulating blood and block blood vessels in the brain, thus, causing a stroke. Your doctor can detect this condition and treat it with medications.



3. Smoking doubles the risk for a stroke. If you smoke, stop smoking. If you have never smoked, resist any temptation to start smoking.
4. Drinking too much alcohol can also increase the risk for a stroke by as much as three times. Considering this and all the other problems that alcohol causes, you are better off not drinking alcohol at all.
5. High cholesterol in the blood causes plaque build-up in the arteries (blood vessels) leading to narrowing of these blood vessels which eventually causes a stroke. Have your cholesterol level checked and do something about it if it is high. Sometimes a high cholesterol can be lowered simply by exercise and diet changes.
6. Diabetes has many complications including stroke. If you have diabetes, make sure it is under control at all times.
7. If you lead a sedentary lifestyle, you must exercise. Walking, riding a bicycle, splitting logs with an axe and digging may be looked down upon as primitive activities, but they actually keep you healthy.

8. Cut down on salt and fat in your diet. A diet low in salt and fat not only lowers your blood pressure, but also lowers your risk for a stroke.
9. Circulation problems may arise in the heart, blood vessels or the blood itself that can lead to the development of a stroke. Your doctor can run tests that can detect such problems.
10. You already know the symptoms and signs of a stroke. Remember them so that you can recognize a stroke and react appropriately in a timely manner.

Whether you live in a country with an excellent, modern health care system or in one with no health care at all, there are things you can do to improve your health and prolong your life. These guidelines can help you do just that. There is no excuse for doing nothing.

### Contact Information

Phone: 801-364-2811

Email: [rsimbe@yahoo.com](mailto:rsimbe@yahoo.com)

Skype: rsimbe



## HONORING MARY BASSIOUNI



Mary Nura Bassiouni was an icon of community leadership, a pioneering politician, and a devoted humanitarian. The second-eldest daughter of Elizabeth Soro Sangwa Luwo and Philip Soro. Mary was born in Juba, Sudan, on June 12, 1946. She was educated at Kator Elementary School in Juba. Then she attended Loa Intermediate School, before proceeding to St. Teresa's Teachers Training College, Kator, where she trained as a primary school teacher. She obtained a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) in Business Administration from Pacific Western University. Throughout her school years, Mary exhibited remarkable natural

leadership skills and demonstrated the key traits that would later define her Public Service career – fearless leadership, passionate advocacy, progressive values and strong, community-centered principles.

### Activist and Banker

Growing up in a politically-conscious family with deep roots in Public Service, Mary Bassiouni became a passionate supporter of the Southern Sudanese cause. She joined the Southern Front, then the leading political movement, and became a strong party activist as the South struggled for self-determination. Following her graduation, she also found another calling in the financial sector in the Barclays Bank in Juba, Southern Sudan. The Ministry of Education and Barclay's Bank conducted an extensive search for highly qualified Southern Sudanese women, and Mary was selected, becoming the first Southern Sudanese woman to join the Bank.

### Rising Star in Exile

Mary met her soul mate, David S. Bassiouni, in 1965 when both were active student leaders at the frontlines of the Southern cause. It was the beginning of a special union that would last more than forty years – she pursued the path of a rising political phenomenon while he attended Khartoum University's School of Veterinary Medicine. Following death threats and harassment, Mary and many members of the Front went into exile in Uganda. During her exile, Mary was appointed as an official at the Nigerian High Commission but she continued to champion the cause and supported Southern Sudanese refugees in Uganda.

### Wife, Mother and Political Leader

Following her return from exile in 1965, Mary resumed work for Barclays Bank in Khartoum and continued to advocate for the Southern Sudanese. Within five years, she would fulfill multiple roles as a loving wife, doting mother, successful banker and emerging politician. In 1967, she married Dr. David Bassiouni as he started his veterinary career and then gave birth to Emile in Kassala two years later. Aida would follow in 1972 and David, Jr. would join the family in 1976. Balancing the duties of a doting mother with her career, Mary continued to work for Barclays Bank while continuing to advocate for the Southern Sudanese cause.

David and Mary returned to Juba in 1972 following the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972 and played a leading role in the establishment and running of the Regional Government in South Sudan. Once there, Mary left the banking world, became a full-time politician and continued her meteoric rise up the political ladder. She became the President of the Sudanese Women's Union, the first women's organization in Southern Sudan, and devoted her time to promoting women's rights and issues in the Region.

Mary was then elected into office to represent the women of Equatoria in the newly established Regional Assembly, another validation of her fierce commitment to women's issues and Southern Sudanese concerns and aspirations. She was subsequently re-elected twice to the Southern Regional Parliament. She designed and built the Multi-Purpose Sudanese Women Center in Juba which continues to offer a variety of vocational training and facilities to the women of Southern Sudan. It stands out as milestone of her legacy of distinguished contribution to Public Service.

### Political Pioneer and National Figure

As a three-term Member of Parliament, Mary Bassiouni became a member of the Sudanese Socialist Union (SSU) and rose to the membership of its Politburo, then the highest political organ in the country. Soon afterwards, she became the first Southern Sudanese woman to serve as Minister of Internal Affairs in the cabinet of President Jaafar Nimery. While representing her Southern Sudanese constituency, she also championed a variety of national and international causes ranging from contributing to the pioneering OAU initiatives in addressing gender issues, to helping to implement the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

In her capacity as a leader and a female icon, she represented and championed Sudanese interests in conferences throughout the African continent, the Middle East and Europe. She lent her voice and expertise to hundreds of seminars, conferences and workshops. Throughout this time, she continued to make difficult and courageous decisions based on deeply-held values and principles. In 1983, she took a principled stand against the proposed imposition of Sharia Law in the Sudan because of her commitment to national harmony. This historic stand ended up costing her the ministerial position, which she happily relinquished for the greater interest. She subsequently left the government in protest, preferring to live in exile instead of compromising her principles.

### Advocate and Humanitarian

After leaving The Sudan in the early Eighties, Mary lent her unique expertise and powerful voice to dozens of women's organizations and NGOs, advocating on behalf of women around the world. Whether it was fighting for refugees at the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, lobbying for human rights through Advocates International or advocating for economic and social development programmes within the UN and regional organizations, she continued to eloquently argue the case for stopping discrimination against women and giving them equal opportunities worldwide. She earned a series of leadership awards from the Women's Commission, the New York Association for New Immigrants and other organizations. Mary was also a stout and an active supporter of Yei Educational Development Agency (YEDA), an organization that was formed in the USA to help sponsor students from Yei to study in higher institutions in Uganda. She paid her yearly contributions promptly and whenever she was outside the USA she would instruct her daughter Aida to send her contribution on her behalf. She also accompanied Dr. Bassiouni in his various country assignments in UNICEF and the UN. Throughout this time, Mary gave David and the family immeasurable support as a devoted wife and a highly gregarious and popular socialite within the international community.

### A Lasting Legacy

To the end, Mary Nura Bassiouni remained a fearless leader, a champion for the voiceless and an iconic role model for the Southern Sudanese community, the Sudanese people and thousands more far beyond the country's borders. She will be missed by all for so many reasons but all will agree that she cared deeply and toiled selflessly for the disadvantaged members of her society, especially women. Her legacy of selfless Public Service, uncompromised principles, progressive values and female empowerment will continue to inspire and embolden future generations.



## LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO YEDA SUPPORTERS

By Khamis John Bebe

September 17, 2008

Greetings to you in Jesus name.

My name is Khamis John Bebe, a beneficiary of Yei Education & Development Agency (YEDA). I just completed my school early August, 2008 from Uganda Christian University - Mukono.



I wish to extend my sincere heartfelt appreciation to you, though words of mouth can not measure my gratitude.

Indeed, you are chosen to do this noble task of training and empowering young men and women in this land (Sudan). You have made it possible for people like me, who could not make it to pursue any course at higher institution. You offered me the necessary support I needed i.e. morally, spiritually and above all financially.

I wouldn't have made it this far without YEDA's support and because of you, I have attained my education. You prepared me for the great task ahead of me and I sincerely want to say that the Education I got have sharpened and empowered me for the big task in building Sudan culturally, socially and economically.

This explains why I was immediately requested to serve in the County Education Office - Yei River County as the Assistant County Education Director as soon as I completed my course, though on a voluntary base.

Bravo YEDA. I am impressed and inspired by the work YEDA is doing. God bless all those individuals who generously contributed towards YEDA. The good Lord bless your families and the work you do. I am now available to serve the community at any time. I am willing to do what ever YEDA ask of me.

Finally, I do very much appreciate the efforts YEDA had made towards my education. I want to say THANK YOU. I am now sharpened to work better. I also do appreciate any chance or scholarship to further my education for better quality service to our people.

Looking forward to commutating with you always.

Bravo YEDA USA, bravo YEDA Uganda and Bravo YEDA Sudan.

YOURS

**Khamis John Bebe**

N.B. Contact: Telephone No. +256477149993

## 2008 Recognition

Poni Josephine Lokudu, B.B.A.

Business Administration

Makerere University - Uganda

Khamis John Bebe, B.S.

Education

Uganda Christian University - Uganda

Rt. Rev. Hilary L.. Adeba, MA

Theology

Cliff College - United Kingdom