Obituary: JOSHUA B. MUSINGUZI, MB. ChB., MPH

Remembered By George K. Mutema, Oncologic Surgical Pathologist, Southern Ohio Pathology Consultants, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Dr. Joshua Bazaale Musinguzi, MB ChB, MPH born on September 9, 1963 passed away on June 7, 2024 in India, following an unsuccessful cardiac surgical procedure. Joshua had recently retired as Assistant Commissioner/ Program Manager of the AIDS control program in the Ministry of Health, Uganda.

Our journey with Joshua began in 1977, when we joined Kings College Budo for high school education. What was striking about Joshua, was that he was not only amongst the brightest and most gifted intellectual in our cohort, but also had a great sense of humor and possessed the rare ability to see good in everyone. Following his successful completion of both O level and A level education, he joined Makerere University Medical School where he maintained his self-discipline, commitment to his studies and not only remained close with those of us with whom he had been in Budo, but he went on to make many more lifelong friends with other members of the Medical School class.

Following his medical school graduation in 1989, Joshua only served as a Medical Officer at Lubaga Hospital for a short time and was quickly tapped by the AIDS Control Program (ACP) manager at the Ministry of Health to go and support the ACP that was battling the HIV epidemic at the time. Joshua spent almost all his professional career at the ACP where he rose through the ranks from a Medical Officer, Senior Medical Officer, Principal Medical Officer and finally to Assistant Commissioner Health services/Program Manager. Joshua has been a pillar in the national HIV response and published his scientific work on HIV widely, which in turn guided policy formulation, HIV prevention and control strategies in Uganda and globally. Serving as Assistant commissioner/Program Manager ACP in the Ministry of health, Joshua coordinated partners and efforts for HIV prevention, treatment and support in Uganda. Under his able leadership, several initiatives for HIV prevention, treatment and integration of non-communicable diseases management into HIV programs were scaled up. As a result, Uganda registered sustained declining numbers of new HIV infections and AIDS related deaths. In addition, children born with HIV also drastically reduced from over 18,000 prior, to around 5000 per year. By so doing, Joshua not only led efforts to evert new HIV infections, but also efforts that saved lives of many people in Uganda. In fact, Uganda is on the verge of obtaining HIV epidemic control. He also facilitated and supported collaborations and research and policy making throughout his career. Joshua's advocacy was instrumental in garnering support from the global fund, leading to several impactful research studies between 2013 and 2017, conducted in partnership with the Makerere School of Public Health. He was a champion of ensuring access and availability of antiretroviral drugs and strongly supported HIV self-testing to reduce stigma. We remember him as a health integration champion who promoted evidence-based policy and advocated for comprehensive health care.



Dr. Joshua Bazaale Musinguzi

On the personal side, Joshua was friendly but principled, laughed a lot, had a whacky sense of humor and loved International politics as well as political debates. To stay well-informed, the local national newspaper (New Vision) was delivered daily to his house at 6 am and he religiously listened to the BBC. Surprisingly, he never took the next logical step of standing for elective office. His lovely wife Juliet and their 3 children, Karen, Timothy and Mark were his entire world. He was thankful for them and would beam with pride when talking about them. Joshua was a man of deep faith and his love of God manifested prominently throughout his life, an attribute we all witnessed since our teenage years. He regularly attended church both in Kampala and his home area in Masindi town, where he was the Head of Laity at his local church. It is at Kings College Budo that he started he is lifelong passion for both cricket and football.

Fare well Joshua, it has been a privilege over the last 47 years to have known you as both a friend and medical colleague, yours was a life well lived, you are a shining example of compassion, dedication and unfaltering loyalty. Rest In Peace - "my main man".

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