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Gentle surgeon restores hope and health

By Kate Gilderdale
Stouffville Free Press

During a whirlwind visit to Canada in September, Dr. John Ekure toured Sick Children's Hospital, gave a speech at the Michael 'Pinball' Clemons Foundation gala fundraiser in Toronto, and was guest of honour at



Dr. Ekure greets a young patient and his mother at Kumi Hospital in Uganda.

a reception at Christian Blind Mission International on Stouffville Road.

Dr. Ekure is the resident orthopaedic surgeon at Kumi Hospital in Eastern Uganda. Although he grew up in poverty, he attended a Christian mission school and proved to be a bright student, who dreamed of becoming a doctor.

He qualified for the science program at Makerere University in Kampala, where he continued to excel, and was accepted into medical school, even though he had no means of paying for his education. Happily, his academic performance, attitude and faith attracted the attention of renowned orthopaedic surgeon Dr. Norgrove Penny, who was recently awarded the Order of Canada.

"In 1998 I met with a Canadian orthopaedic surgeon working for CBMI," said Dr. Ekure of his introduction to Dr. Penny. "I was working in Kampala as a medical officer and I was very interested in orthopaedics. In the area that I come from, there are many people and children with disabilities and I wanted to help find them a way of fending for themselves."

On Dr. Penny's recommendation, CBMI Canada agreed to finance a scholarship to enable Dr. Ekure to finish his studies. "I did an intensive course in South Africa with the support of CBMI," said Dr. Ekure.

"I came back to Uganda in 2005 and I have been able to help many children. This year alone I have been able to help 820 children. It keeps me very, very busy." He performs as many surgical procedures as possible, usually between 10 and 15 every day.

Toronto Argonauts' head coach 'Pinball' Clemons has been a staunch supporter of CBMI for several years, and he and his wife, Diane, travelled to Uganda with Dave McComiskey and Lindsay O'Connor of CBMI, where they witnessed an operation on 10-year-old Hope. The young girl was suffering from Blount's Disease, a disorder which results in such severe bowing of the legs that they form a circle.

Today, thanks to the dedication of Dr. Ekure and his

See SURGEON on pg 3



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*** These statistics are compiled by IMS, an Independent Research Company using Toronto Real Estate Board Data ***

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