



## Leading the Way

### Africabio Trains Lab Techs

In late 2014 Africabio Enterprises Inc. held a meeting with the first team of technicians involved in the Ebola response effort, led by Liberia's Ministry of Health. This initial training opportunity was intended to renew and build the confidence of laboratory technicians in Liberia in the wake of the deadly Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak; to share requisite knowledge and skills to safeguard lab workers against infection as they delivered services to Liberia; to train lab staff on infection control measures on EVD; to train lab staff on the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPEs); to train lab staff on EVD sample collection, packaging, and transportation; and to discuss challenges facing labs and lab workers and share experiences.



These were the few brave lab technicians who had chosen to work on the front lines, when most technicians had abandoned health facilities due to fear of losing their lives following the death of six colleagues. Moreover, these technicians worked diligently although the response to Ebola was riddled with inefficient logistics, sample collection errors, minimal PPEs, lab data that lacked purpose, and a lack of reliable communication procedures between facilities.



## Africabio Hosts Lab Week Celebration

### First Conference of its Kind in Liberia

Africabio Enterprises Inc. organized and hosted the first Medical Laboratory Professionals Week conference in Liberia's history, called Celebrate Lab Week 2015, to bring needed attention to the state of diagnostics in the country. The event brought together more than 150 attendees, including lab technicians, Ministry of Health staff, and partners, to

discuss the issues critical to building an environment where diagnostics are recognized as essential to clinical care and research.

Dr. Francis Kateh, Liberia's chief medical officer designate, opened the event by encouraging technicians to "own the willingness to learn and grow their craft." The World Health Organization (WHO) sponsored the opening plenary. WHO representative Victor Delrio thanked Africabio for championing the discussion on improving diagnostics in Liberia's health care system.

Medical Laboratory Professionals Week is an annual, worldwide celebration of the lab professionals and pathologists who play a vital role in every aspect of health care.

## Hosts

Africabio Enterprises, Inc., Fouta Corporation and World Health Organization

## Leaders

Clinton Health Access Initiative, Liberia Coca Cola Bottling Company, Prestige Motors Corporation and UMARCO Liberia/Bolloré Africa Logistics

## Supporters

Amethyst Technologies, Inc., HEARTT Foundation, Inc., B-Kay Pharmacy, Inc. and Med Air Africa

## Special Thanks

BIO Ventures in Global Health, CDC, Ibex, LIBR, Ministry of Health, NAMRU, NPHRL and US AMRID

## Africabio CEO Honored at NPHRL Event

Lab Techs Also Recognized as  
Liberia Declared Ebola-Free

Shortly after Liberia was declared Ebola-free, Africabio Enterprises Inc. CEO Candace Eastman was recognized at a program honoring Ebola response laboratory staff who worked at the National Public Health Reference Laboratory (NPHRL), the only Liberian-owned lab in the country. Hosted by the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases and National Institute of Health lab team, the event highlighted Eastman's continued involvement in ensuring that the skills, preparation, and safety procedures of lab technicians were updated during the outbreak.



Fortoma Bolay, director of the Liberian Institute for Biomedical Research (LIBR), where NPHRL is housed, thanked partners for their collaboration and hailed the technicians who worked under stressful conditions for almost a year. Also in attendance was Dr. Michelle A. Jefferson, who served as the operations officer-in-charge for the Ebola Outbreak Response National Reference Lab on the U.S. side for the past four months.

"Today, we take a moment to honor those Liberian lab technologists and NPHRL staff who have worked behind the scenes processing the thousands of samples which provided the health care workers and epidemiologists the important confirmed Ebola diagnoses that only they could do," she said. "We show our appreciation for their dedication and selfless service to their country as we also celebration Liberia becoming Ebola-free."

During the event, one of the technicians remarked on the growth of the NPHRL, remembering when it was only one room with scanty equipment and housed at the John F. Kennedy Medical Center in 2008. Lab services in Liberia have been slow to evolve; even now, most people who can afford the expense travel to neighboring countries or the U.S. for the most basic diagnostic tests.

Pictured above are Lawrence Fakoli III (LIBR), Josiah S. George (NRL), Aaron Momolu (NRL), Fahn Taweh (NRL), and Vera Yatta Walker (NRL).

Other staff as well as senior medical lab technicians/technologists who participated in the Ebola virus response at the National Diagnostic Unit included Jerry G. Daboi, facility operations manager; John B. Dogba, quality manager; Alfred

Nyuma, field coordinator; Nelson Berrian; Henry Langford; Francis Mulbah; Kerkula Mulbah; Gertrude Jeh-Mulbah; Arthur Brown; and Sengbe Opati Nyilah, laboratory professionals.

County Diagnostic Supervisors include: Gayduoba Flomo, Montserrado County; Thomas Barnd, Margibi County; Mustipha Senesie, Bomi County; Saturday Quellie, Bong County; Mark Saysay, Lofa County; Andrew Samolu, Gbarpolu County; Roschester Gaye, Sinoe County; Sharty K. Sandy, River Cess County; Quanseh Gbemie, Nimba County; Albert Sunh, Grand Gedeh County; Roger Parker, River Gee County; Isaac Gbapawea, Grand Bassa County; George Smith, Maryland County; David Veseley, Grand Kru County; and Edwin Bull, Grand Cape Mount County.

Africabio, together with Liberia, celebrate these lab professionals and the essential roles they played during the health crisis.



The image is a screenshot of the BIO 2015 International Convention website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Registration, myBIO, Schedule, Exhibit, Blog, Media, Career Fair, and Contact Us. The date and location are listed as June 15-18, 2015 | Philadelphia, PA. Below the navigation bar, there is a main banner with the BIO logo and the text 'The Global Event for Biotechnology'. The banner features a large graphic with the text 'BIO 2015 ATTENDEE LIST 65 Countries + 2,500 CEOs' and 'Join 15,000 attendees from around the globe'. A large 'WOW' graphic is also visible. A button labeled 'ATTENDEE LIST' is present at the bottom of the banner. On the left side, there are social media icons for LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

## Private Sector Marketability

### A New Direction for Liberia as Africabio CEO Attends Biotech Conference

Candace Eastman, CEO of Africabio Enterprises Inc., will attend the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) 2015 Convention along with Dr. Francis Kateh, deputy minister and chief medical officer of Liberia, who will be featured in two sessions under the Emerging Opportunities in Global Markets track.

BIO covers the spectrum of life-science innovations and application areas. Drug discovery, biomanufacturing, genomics, biofuels, nanotechnology, and cell therapy are just a few of the industries that will be represented at the convention. Kateh and Eastman's attendance is driven in part by the need to develop an improved public healthcare system in countries like Liberia, as well as the need for a private sector that will use lessons learned to support a national response to any epidemic. In a donor-driven environment, underdeveloped countries like Liberia need to increase their marketability for private-sector development through local and foreign partnerships. The creation of mechanisms that promote research focused on unmet needs in diagnostics, vaccines, and drugs is also critical.