

Dear Colleagues,

We have a problem. The lack of surgeons willing to serve on the mission field remains our biggest hurdle to adequately staff our existing training programs and expand to the six or so hospitals that would love for us to open new programs. Our goal is to train and disciple 100 African surgeons by 2020, and unless we can expand (not just survive!), we will not reach that goal. In the meantime, people die of simple surgical diseases and souls go to a Christless eternity.

Simply stated, God is a gentleman. It doesn't seem like that should be a problem for us, but it is. He is still Jehovah-Jireh - the God who provides - but as a gentleman, He is not willing to force anyone to accept His call.

As you read in this bulletin of both triumphs and wide open doors for exciting service, please let yourself hear God's call. As a veteran of 32 years in Africa, I promise you that the very best years of my life have been the eleven years that I have trained and disciplined the wonderful young physicians of PAACS.

Dave Thompson
PAACS Director for Africa



The Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS)

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Bringing Christians together from around the world to train and disciple African surgeons in Africa.

Our goal: To train and disciple 100 African surgeons by 2020.

ELSON GRADUATES, RETURNS TO MADAGASCAR



Dr. Elson Randrianantenaina received his certificate of specialization in general surgery from PAACS during a joyous ceremony held at the Ngaoundéré Protestant Hospital on August 7. The chapel was packed and many had to stand outside and listen through the windows and doors. Dr. Aroga, the hospital Director welcomed everyone, followed by Dr. Salpou, the Director for the Cameroon ELCA Health Service. Dr. Jim Brown used the opportunity to explain PAACS's vision of training Christian surgeons in Africa in evangelical mission hospitals, with the hope that they will build their careers in Africa. He spoke about the importance of academics and evangelism, high standards and quality of care, and doing all of it so that those who do not know Jesus will come to know Him.

Dr. Brown also praised Dr. Elson who, in his mind, exemplifies what PAACS is all about – a well-trained African surgeon who is passionate about the Lord and is returning to serve his country. He will be the only surgeon at Ejeda Lutheran hospital, located in southern Madagascar and is the only referral hospital for a large, indigent population within a radius of 250 kilometers.

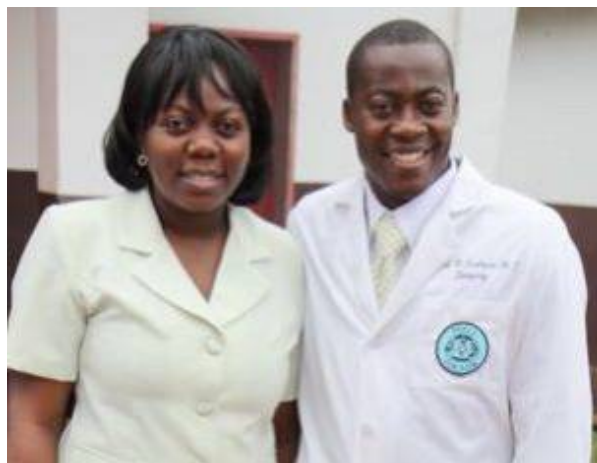
When it was his turn to speak, Dr. Elson he expressed his deep gratitude for the surgical training he received from PAACS and described his future service in Madagascar. He also honored the people at the hospital who contributed to his training. At times during the ceremony, the people in the crowd cheered wildly, jumped to their feet, clapped, whistled, trilled, and even danced in the aisles!

The final speaker was the president of the ELCA, who explained how important PAACS is to the church, to the city of Ngaoundéré, and to Africa. Afterwards, Carolyn Brown invited everyone to a reception for which she had spent days preparing.

Dr. Elson, Hanitra, and their three children left for Madagascar on August 18. The entire PAACS organization congratulates Dr. Elson for his achievement, thanks his wife Hanitra for her years of service as Administrative Assistant to the Program Directors at both Bansa and Ngaoundéré, and acknowledges the surgeons who trained him, with special honors to Drs. Eugene Cleek, Chukwudi Okorie, and Jim Brown.

THE FIRST PAACS GABONESE RESIDENT

In 1994, Dr David Thompson had the dream of training Gabonese surgeons and that dream triggered the conversations that led to the birth of PAACS. Now, fifteen years later, it has come true! Dr. Simplicie TCHOBA, pictured here with his wife Neni, a dentist, is our newest PAACS resident. Both trained in Moscow and are fluent in Russian. Just prior to starting his training, Simplicie completed six months of formal English training in Nairobi.



Neni and Simplicie Tchoba

Simplicie began his training at Bongolo Hospital on August 19. The couple has a two-year old daughter.

ORTHOPEDIST BOB GREENE REPORTS FROM SODDO

The rains have started now in the highlands of southern Ethiopia. God is blessing in other ways too, even by delays in the operating room! Orthopedic surgeon Bob Greene reports, *“Abegno, a 16 year-old cattle-herder from the border with Kenya, came to SCH for care when cancer caused his right femur to break. After a few days in traction, his father came and agreed to an amputation. While in the operating room waiting for two attempted spinals to take (they never did), we had some time to chat and pray with Abegno.*

“We called his brother into the OR to interpret for us. Dr. Daniel Gidabu, the PAACS surgery resident on my service, handled the interview. Abegno said he knew about “Christo” and wanted to believe in him. Daniel then prayed with him and announced with pleasure to those of us gathered around that Abegno had accepted Christ!

“This changed an otherwise somber operation into a time of celebration for a new child born of

God. The chaplains reported later that Abegno's father also believed. Abegno is getting around on crutches now and will soon be able to return home. If the cancer that caused his fracture has spread, his days on earth may be numbered. But he now has the joy of Christ within him, and the hope of eternal life.

"Later this same week another patient accepted Christ while on the operating table."

OUR MOST URGENT NEEDS!



Surgeon Mark Couture, seen operating with the residents, is a frequent visitor to Mbingo.

This PAACS training program urgently needs an interim surgeon to come from July 2010 to the end of June 2011.

1. Interim Surgeon for MBINGO BAPTIST HOSPITAL

Dr. Steve Sparks is scheduled to return to the U.S. in July 2010 with his family for a year of furlough. For the past four years, he has served as the PAACS Program Director at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon. After his year at home, he plans to return to Mbingo. By August, 2010, the program at Mbingo will have at least six and possibly 8 or 10 surgery residents – but only if we have someone to take his place for the year.

Over the past few months, we have included in several of the PAACS Bulletins our appeals for a second general surgeon to join Steve at Mbingo, to both help him train this large group of residents, and to keep the program going during his year of furlough. Unfortunately, there has been no response.

Steve recently wrote us the following note:

"We have 10 months left, I am expected to go home, and we still have no one to work here for the coming year. I am questioning whether I can leave the residents here without someone. I do not think I can. They give me all they can on a daily basis. Can I really tell them how important they are to me, and then leave? If all else fails, I am thinking that I may do the year in 2-month blocks. We will see."

Are there any surgeons reading this who would be willing to serve as the Interim Program Director at Mbingo for just one year, between July 2010 and the end of June 2011? Not only would it be unfair to Steve and his family for him to travel to Cameroon for two months at a time during his furlough year, it would exhaust him. We should not let this happen!

We would also consider two general surgeons volunteering to come for six months at a time to fill in for Steve. Mbingo is one of the most beautiful places on earth, the climate and housing are excellent, and the hospital is well equipped and superbly staffed.

2. Appeal for a surgeon at KIJABE HOSPITAL

Surgeon Rich Davis is the PAACS Program Director for the two-year old general surgery residency program at Kijabe Hospital. The program has two residents and will be accepting two additional residents in January, 2010 if housing can be arranged. Rich recently wrote the following appeal:

"I am right now the only surgeon here at Kijabe working with our PAACS residents. I met with my resident Jack Barasa a month ago, and he said that he'd like a

journal club, weekly exams, and other things that we're supposed to be doing. It's all I can do to keep up with our surgical load and be ready each week for our Schwartz textbook review. I could really use some help, possibly someone with a vision to build up the training program here to what it could be. Someone with experience in running a residency program would be really helpful [but not a requirement]. None of the other surgeons working here are able to help me with this.

I know this is a tall order, but at this time I am writing to everyone I can think of who's ever held a scalpel to ask if they could come and help out in 2010. Another full-time PAACS surgeon would be the best help of all."



Kijabe Hospital, Kenya



View of Rift Valley from the housing campus

Kijabe Hospital has been certified by COSECSA for five years of training in general surgery. It is the oldest and biggest of the Kenyan mission hospitals, the second busiest surgical hospital in Kenya (over 8,000 cases a year) and is located on the escarpment of the Great Rift Valley, approximately 7500 feet above sea level.

3. NEW TEXTBOOKS NEEDED FOR OUR RESIDENTS

The newest edition of Schwartz's "Principles of Surgery" will be coming out shortly. With new residents coming to all of our programs, we need to purchase the new 9th edition for all 34 of our residents, and one each for our six program directors. If you are interested in supporting this project, please contact PAACS Administrator Ervin Barham at Ervin.barham@paacs.net. It's going to take time to purchase these books and get them out to the hospitals for our residents, so the sooner we can order the books, the better.

THE PAACS SURGEON'S PRAYER

The following PAACS Surgeon's prayer was recently written and read at the White Coat Ceremony for Bongolo's newest resident, Simplice Tchoba. The prayer will be given to all of our PAACS residents throughout the system and it will function to continually remind them of the principles upon which we as Christian surgeons should operate.

I, _____, recognize Jesus Christ as the Great Physician and my personal Savior, and will practice my profession seeking to emulate the mind, heart and behavior of Christ. I wish to be held accountable and to be known as a person of integrity, excellence, honesty, and love. I recognize the sanctity of human life and will not give any drug or perform any procedure which will cause deliberate harm or loss of life of fetus, child, adult, or elderly adult.

My patient's best interest shall be my highest guiding principle. I shall recognize their intrinsic value to God, remember that His healing is eternal when mine is only temporary, respect their dignity, and teach at all times and partner with them in their health care. I will respect patients' right to confidentiality.

I will always strive to care for the poor and disadvantaged, not discriminating unfairly. I will practice a life-long pattern of self-assessment of my results, of learning and of continuous improvement. I promise to practice within the constraints of my knowledge and

skills and refer patients, if possible, to others with greater skills and knowledge. I will act immediately on behalf of any patient if I believe that a colleague's professional behavior may be putting patients at risk.

I pray for God's help in doing these things for His Honor and His glory. Amen.

A translation in French is available on demand from the PAACS Director for Africa, directorforafrica@paacs.net. Those of you who have functioned as PAACS surgeons on short-term faculty may have a personalized electronic copy with logos suitable for printing and framing by requesting one from Bruce Steffes at ceo@paacs.net.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SNAPSHOTS

- **PAACS HAS A NEW OFFICE** - PAACS is finally converting from just being a virtual company to a virtual company with a real office. We have rented an office in Fayetteville, North Carolina! Currently, it is just an empty room. If you would be interested in contributing specifically to furnish the new PAACS office, please contact Bruce Steffes at ceo@paacs.net. The new contact information for PAACS is below. Please make note of this change of address and new phone number. If you regularly send contributions to the Louisville address previously used, please use the address below from now on.

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- **Dr. Norman James** - In July, Dr. Norman James responded to the story in our July 2009 Bulletin in which we erroneously stated that Dr. Martin Salia was the only surgeon serving at Bansa Baptist Hospital. At our request, Norman provided more accurate information about the trips he and his wife have made to BBH over the past few years. It was not our intention to misrepresent the facts. We regret the error and praise God for the blessing that the James' have been to BBH.

"Over the last six years we have made six extended short term trips. The first were for two months each, and the last two were intended to be four months long [but were extended]. During these years, much of my work has shifted away from strictly reconstructive plastic surgery [Dr. Norman's specialty] to more in the area of general surgery. Now Martin [Salia] and I are running the surgical service, evenly splitting the emergency call for the surgical side of the hospital.

We feel a strong directive from the Lord to work here at Bansa Baptist Hospital in Kumbo, and to maintain and strengthen what has been created here by those missionaries who preceded us and by the people of Kumbo, who worked side by side with them."



- Our warmest congratulations to Paul and Becca Gray! Lydia Gray was born by C-section on August 13 and weight 7 lbs, 8 oz (3.18 kg—you can see her head on Becca's left shoulder!). The Grays will return to Soddo Christian Hospital in southern Ethiopia in mid-October.

- Two months ago, we posed a question in the PAACS Bulletin. To finally give you relief from the great anxiety caused by not knowing: the mystery man with the flowered surgical hat in the operating room on the Mercy Ship is none other than the very fashionable...

Jean Faya Yaradouno!



- **Friends of PAACS Dinner** – Make your reservations now for our annual PAACS dinner. It will be held Thursday evening, November 12 at the Celebration Hall at the First Baptist Church of Middletown, the same location we enjoyed last year. The dinner and program are scheduled from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. Because of budgetary restrictions, for the first time we will be required to ask each guest to purchase \$20 ticket to cover the cost of the meal. Missionaries, residents and medical students will not be required to purchase a ticket. Please invite friends, colleagues, residents and students who might be interested in learning more about PAACS and be sure to put it on your own calendar. Please contact Gerald.Swim@paacs.net to make your reservations.
- The latest **PowerPoint slide show about PAACS** is available on the bottom of the main page of the www.paacs.net website. This may help you if you wish to share the good news about what PAACS is doing.

REQUESTS FOR PRAYER

- Pray that God would call surgeons to serve with PAACS at Mbingo, Kijabe, and Bansa Hospitals, and that those He calls will respond. Relief for our present faculty is vital and growth is impossible without those who answer.
- Pray that God would provide our considerable financial needs even through this economic downturn. The need for housing is critical.
- Pray for Elson and Hanitra Randrianantenaina and their children as they start all over again in Madagascar.
- Pray for Jim Brown at Ngaoundéré Hospital, as he covers the hospital's surgical emergencies without residents. Pray for residents DeGaulle Mifila and Gerald Ekwen as they move with their families to Mbingo and adjust to a new training program.
- Pray for the new residents who have been accepted at Bongolo Hospital, Soddo, and tentatively accepted for Ngaoundéré.
- Pray for 4th year resident Jean Claude Bateneni from Bongolo as he heads to Ngaoundéré September 11 for a month of ORMF surgery with Tim Bartholomew, followed by two months of trauma and general surgery with Jim Brown.
- Pray that we will be able to meet all the requirements for documentation for two of our PAACS residents to do six-month rotations in South Africa at Edendale Hospital and Grey's Hospital in Pietermaritzburg in trauma, anesthesia, critical care, and pediatric surgery. The first resident is scheduled to start in January, 2010, and the second in July. Both residents will travel with their families.
- Pray that our efforts to formally register PAACS in Kenya will soon meet with success. Pray for similar efforts in Ethiopia, Cameroun, and Gabon.

Editors

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