

Dear Friends of PAACS:

There is one more new surgeon in Africa! Congratulations to the new graduate of the PAACS-Galmi program. May God richly bless His endeavors for Him and for the people of Africa.

PAACS residents at the end of their second year and in their fifth year will be sitting the COSECSA written exams on Wednesday, September 5. Pray that they will recall what they have learned and perform well on this test.

Praise God that all the surgeons and residents are back at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon – continue to pray for peace for the country.

This is the 101st edition of the Bulletin where I have served as one of the editors. I hope that you look forward each month as much as I do to see what God is doing within PAACS.

The Editor



PAACS Bulletin Bulletin

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

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Our vision: PAACS trained surgeons living the gospel and ministering to the sick.

Our Mission: PAACS exists to train and disciple African surgeons to glorify God and to provide excellent, compassionate care to those most in need.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear PAACS Family:

Praise God!!!! Most of the PAACS residents returned to Mbingo Baptist Hospital (MBH) in Cameroon to continue their surgical training. The residents from MBH had been temporarily relocated to Banso Hospital due to violence in the area near Bamenda. The hostility in the vicinity of MBH has subsided allowing for the continued surgical training of our residents at the hospital. Dr. Keir Thelander, PAACS Chief Medical Officer, and Rev. Ed Searce, PAACS Spiritual Dean, visited both MBH and Banso Hospital in August and met with the faculty, residents and the administrators at MBH to ensure the smooth transition of the residents back to MBH. Thank you for your continued prayers for the safety of everyone at MBH as well as the people of Cameroon. We are grateful that the PAACS residents have returned to the hospital. May the shalom of our God reign supreme in Cameroon.

As I reported last month based on preliminary numbers that have since been verified, the most recent fiscal year ended on a strong financial note for PAACS. We saw a record amount of giving for the month of June closed the year with the greatest single-year giving totals ever. The PAACS administration also worked diligently to keep expenses below budget. This allowed us to end the year with a positive bottom line. Details about the PAACS July 2017- June 2018 financial activities will be outlined in the PAACS Annual Report to be publicized in October. Thank you to all of our supporters who gave sacrificially to help us meet our fiscal needs.

In addition to the financial provision for PAACS, God brought 244 short-term missionaries to our PAACS programs in 2017-18. This is the largest number of short-term volunteers that we have ever had in a year. We are thankful to everyone who volunteered their time and talents to serve God and help train and mentor our PAACS residents. If all of this is not enough, PAACS has been blessed with the largest number of applicants applying for residency training slots in our programs for January 2019. Thus far, we have 127 applicants for approximately 28 resident positions.

We are thankful to our Heavenly Father for His many blessings, provision and grace upon His ministry. As such, PAACS will be holding its Second Annual Day of Fasting and Prayer on Monday, October 8th. Please mark your calendar and join us in fasting and praying in gratitude to God for His goodness and generosity to PAACS and to the people of Africa. We will also give thanks and pray blessings for the PAACS family, volunteers, prayer warriors, leaders and supporters. In addition, we will pray for the PAACS residents, faculty, programs, administration and leadership. More information will be provided prior to the date

May the Lord bless each member of the PAACS family abundantly.

Blessings,

Susan Koshy

Executive Director

SECOND GRADUATE FROM GALMI

By Joe Starke

On August 4th, the SIM Galmi Hospital PAACS program in Niger held its second graduation. With great joy, we celebrated God's goodness throughout the 5 years of Dr. Maghuta Juvenal Musavuli's training at



Back row (L to R): Noel Ndayisenge (PGY-1), Elvis Mbanzabugabo (PGY-3), Joe Starke (Program Director), Jean-Luc Kazoya (PGY-4), Enock Mupepe (PGY-2);
Front row: Audry Banza (PGY-1), Andrew John (PGY-3), Juvenal Musavuli (graduate), Yakoubou Sanoussi (Asst. Program Director)

Galmi.

The graduation ceremony began with a time of corporate worship. The processional of the faculty and graduate followed to the music of Pomp and Circumstance. Following the opening prayer, Dr. Joe Starke, the Program Director, greeted the crowd and introduced the invited guests. He then introduced the commencement speaker, Mr. Steve Schmidt, the outgoing SIM Niger Area Director. Mr. Schmidt has served in the role of SIM Niger Director for the past 12 years and has been a key supporter of the Galmi PAACS program throughout its course.

Steve shared from 2 Corinthians 4: 6 – 15. Verses 7-9 state:

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

He noted that it is God who fills us with Himself, His word and His gifts. He went on to observe that while there will always be times of challenge that are beyond our training, our capacity and our natural ability. Those challenges will weigh on us, push us and stress us. It is the life and presence of God within us that will carry us through those circumstances, not our own strength. The knowledge that God in us is what we are to cling to at those moments. He noted that in talking to Juvenal before the ceremony, Juvenal had acknowledged that it was God's inner strength that carried him through the challenges of training. Mr. Schmidt encouraged him and all in attendance to remember that truth as they faced the future.

During the presentation of the certificate, Dr. Starke and Dr. Sanoussi (the assistant program director), recounted some the characteristics that have made Dr. Musavuli memorable. A story was told which reflected Juvenal's ability to lead in a manner which brings out the best in people. At the end of a busy day of surgery, there were several cases remaining to be done. The call team including the resident on call, was already tied up with a long case and one of the remaining cases needed to be done urgently. Juvenal, although not on call, stayed to do that operation. The other OR staff were ready to go home. Instead of demanding their help or berating their reluctance, Juvenal placed his arm around one of the anesthesia staff and said "You are the best! I can't do this without you, this man needs our help." The staff member then readily agreed to stay. It is this type of leadership, this willingness to be humble, that marks Dr. Musavuli.



Juvenal Musavuli and his wife, Nzuva Sifa la Rose

The PAACS residents and wives continued the tradition of singing a worship song in all the many languages represented by those in attendance. Dr. Jean-Luc Kazoya, the incoming chief resident, then led the crowd in a prayer of consecration and dedication of Juvenal and Sifa (his wife) to the medical ministry to which God has called them.

The PAACS-Galmi program began in 2012. Musavuli is the second surgeon to graduate from Galmi and 78th surgeon (of all types) to graduate from PAACS. The first graduate from PAACS-Galmi, Yves Mpongo, is taking a pediatric surgery fellowship at Kijabe Hospital.

Musavuli will stay on at SIM-Galmi through the end of this calendar year as a junior attending surgeon and as he studies for his COSECSA FCS exam. He is pursuing future employment options in several locations, including the country of his previous employment in Rwanda.

CMO AND SPIRITUAL DEAN VISIT CAMEROON

By Keir Thelander

Last month, PAACS made the hard decision to relocate residents from Mbingo Baptist Hospital to a calmer region of Cameroon. We appreciate Bango Baptist Hospitals willingness to receive these 10

residents so graciously. They provided housing, adjusted the schedule in the hospital, and allowed the residents to maintain an academic environment even though they were miles from their primary training site. Thank you to the Bango Baptist Hospital staff and administration for being the hands and feet of Christ to our residents.



Ed Searce and Keir Thelander at Bango Baptist Hospital

Meanwhile, the residents' departure from Mbingo Baptist Hospital left an enormous void. Dr. Ebhele and others worked tirelessly during most of this time and were joined by Dr. Brown when he returned from a brief furlough to the US. We are heartbroken over the difficulty that this relocation caused to our colleagues, the hospital, and most importantly, to the patients.

Since the relocation in early July, calm has reigned at Mbingo Baptist Hospital. In early August, the residents were offered a choice to return to Mbingo Baptist Hospital to continue their training at their home site. Eight of the 10 residents plus Dr. Mark Snell made the return trip; two other residents who had taken a leave of absence also returned to Mbingo. Dr. Nigo Lemery stayed behind at Bango Baptist Hospital as he will imminently be completing his PAACS training and leaving for the DRC. As well, Dr. Tresor Mabanza stayed at Bango because his wife was due to deliver their child (see the announcements)

to Bango Baptist Hospital, meet with the residents to offer encouragement and spiritual care, and to meet with surgical faculty to demonstrate our concern for them, too. Of course, we wanted to meet with the administration of Mbingo and communicate to them our concern for the functioning of the hospital and to reiterate that the PAACS decision to relocate the residents was not taken lightly.

We arrived in Douala on Tuesday August 14th. We travelled to Bango Baptist Hospital on August 15th where we were warmly received. The administration was very appreciative at being able to receive the PAACS residents. Dr. Beri Dimla, Chief

I, as the PAACS CMO, and the Spiritual Dean, Rev. Ed Searce, made a trip to Cameroon. The purpose of the trip was multifaceted. We hoped to express thanks



Spiritual Dean, Ed Searce, speaks to the PAACS Residents at Mbingo Hospital.

Medical Officer, gave a warm welcome to us at the morning hospital devotions and mentioned multiple times their interest in having a PAACS program back at Banzo, which was met each time with a round of applause from the staff. Mr. Joce Kangong, Banzo Baptist Hospital Administrator, also invited PAACS back to Banzo. Their hospitality was deeply appreciated. We sat down with both Drs. Nigo and Mabanza for a time of discussion and prayer together. The day finished with a wonderful meal at the home of PAACS grad, Benjamin Malikidogo, who is working there as a surgeon. We were both blessed mightily and it made up for the nine-hour trip. We reflected positively on the time in Banzo as we travelled another 5 hours to Mbingo Baptist Hospital.

Arriving at Mbingo Baptist Hospital, we had the opportunity to share with and hear from the dozen PAACS residents as well as the surgical faculty. Though the gathered group appeared quite calm and comfortable, there were a few items that needed to be cleared up. Additionally, our ongoing commitment to continuous assessment of the situation was emphasized to the residents. Recognizing that with elections in the near future, even the past 5 weeks of calm may not continue and a similar decision may have to be made again. At this point, all the residents are pleased to be home and serving the Lord at Mbingo and feel safe for the time being. Following this, we met with the PAACS surgical faculty. We heard their concerns about the coming days with regard to elections and lack of schooling. We affirmed our mutual belief that the Lord is constant and reliable and can be trusted. Additionally, we agreed that current times are uncertain and require minute to minute willingness to adjust and change. May the Lord bring peace to this region!

The day was rounded out with a nice meal at the home of PAACS Program Director Dr. Jim Brown and Carolyn and where Keir and Ed were joined by Dr. Jacques Ebhele and Dinah, and Dr. Mark Snell. We were privileged to hear how each one was doing and how the Lord continues to direct them, sharing some laughs as well.

The following morning, August 16, we had the pleasure of greeting Mbingo Baptist Hospital at their morning devotions, which is often attended by over 300 people. We expressed our concern for the staff and workers in the midst of this tumultuous region, acknowledging how some of them had lost houses, due to the conflict. We told them of our individual and corporate prayer on their behalf. We noted the extra burden carried by the hospital staff during the absence of the PAACS residents. We encouraged them with Scripture and felt warmly received. This meeting was followed by a meeting with the hospital administration. We were able to listen to their concerns about the events and way in which things had been approached. The Lord was clearly present in the meeting and the unity of the body was maintained as PAACS looks forward to continuing our partnership with Mbingo Baptist Hospital in the years to come.

Given the seriousness of recent events and uncertainty of the future, PAACS residents were offered a chance to meet individually with Dr. Thelander and Rev. Searce. Over a few hours, they met with 5 residents and discussed what the resident's concerns were and sought to answer their questions about possible future decisions and directions.

We ended our time at Mbingo Baptist Hospital with a wonderful meal and dessert. All the residents and their spouses were present. What a joy it was to be together! Rev Searce shared about living like Jesus and encouraged everyone from the Word. Thank you, Lord, for giving us Your word as a help and guide in times of trouble. The residents and faculty were all blessed by the short message. Many fun stories and times were shared, punctuated often by much laughter. What a joy, spirit filled group of men and women! May the Lord's hand of blessing and protection remain on them.

Through the many miles and meetings, it was evident that the Lord's hand had gone before us and was carrying us along. May we look to Him, trusting Him for the future of Mbingo, Cameroon, and PAACS.

We returned to the US Sunday, August 19 after the whirlwind 6-day trip.

A TALE OF TWO TESTIMONIES

By Chi Chung

[Editor's note: Chi Chung was a PAACS Surgeon at Myung Sung Christian Medical Center from July, 2012 – June, 2015. He is presently the Assistant Chief of Surgery at the Kaiser Permanente Riverside Medical Center in Riverside, California. He recently went back to the Ethiopian hospital to visit. This message was given to the MCM hospital staff Saturday, August 25. There was simultaneous interpretation into Amharic by Pastor Henok, the hospital chaplain].

Good morning friends. It is a joy and honor to be with you this morning. As most of you know, my family and I lived in Addis for 3 years. I worked here as a surgeon among you. Three years ago, I became very sick, lying in an ER bed just a few meters behind me.



I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C, a disease from blood infected with a virus that attacks the liver. I was jaundiced, my eyes yellow from liver damage. I could not continue performing surgery as I could harm my patients with the disease.

Over 3 months, my liver function improved. At the time that our family left Ethiopia, it looked like my body had fought the virus and I was cured. We were all giving thanks and praise to God for the healing. Many of you only know that ending as the

story of my illness.

But after I returned to California and started working again, a follow up blood test showed that the Hepatitis C virus had returned. I was shocked and also disappointed that God had messed up my testimony of healing. I felt depressed while I took the antiviral medication for 2 months. I have since been cured, but I was still angry that God had messed up my testimony of healing.

You see, I wanted the first healing without medication to be a sign of God's favor on me. I wanted the story to be like this: I got sick while serving the Lord, and he touched me and healed me because I had been a faithful servant.

But a testimony is not what I've done for God, it is what God has done for me. I realized that I don't need any other sign of God's favor on me than what He has already done for me in Christ Jesus. Born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem to be among us, he suffered and died on the cross to take our sins. He is resurrected and now seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty to be our advocate.

We could never earn our own salvation or deserve mercy from our holy God. **The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is the only sign we need to know God's favor on us.**

Friends, let us not seek riches, better jobs, healing, or anything else as signs of God's blessing. In fact, these things may be a curse if they cause us to praise men, or any institution including church, and draw us away from trusting and honoring God.

In the Book of Hebrews (12:2), it says that Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith. I thank God for allowing me to be sick, to suffer for a little while, and to heal me through a means other than what I wanted. Because it has given me this testimony to tell, that Jesus is more than enough for you and me. Amen.

SHORT-TERM SURGEON'S REPORT FROM MALAWI

[Editor's Note: Tertius Venter is a plastic surgeon from South Africa with extensive experience on the continent doing humanitarian surgery. He has visited multiple PAACS centers in the past teaching his craft to PAACS residents and after a recent successful surgical camp with Operation Smile in Blantyre, Malawi, visited the PAACS program at Malamulo. This article was an extract from his most recent newsletter.]

On August 4, I left Blantyre to join the PAACS program. Malamulo Hospital is situated about an hour's drive from Blantyre on the new road being built to Mozambique. It is common for patients to cross the border from Mozambique to seek treatment at Malamulo Hospital and once the road is completed it is expected that the traffic of patients would increase.

Like in Cameroon, we found that in Malawi many patients have received surgical treatment at some point in their need but either late or ineffective leaving them out of money and still in need of surgery for their original problem.



A 45-year-old teacher was involved in a motor vehicle accident. I saw him at Malamulo hospital through the PAACS program. Although he went to a hospital and has had surgery after his accident a few months earlier, the treatment was inadequate. His injury, and despite the surgery, left him unable to speak

normal, with constant drooling of saliva from his mouth - an impossible situation for a teacher! Eating was also difficult as he was unable to get his lips together. He was just so thankful for the surgery we could do for him, for his improved appearance and mouth function that was restored. Just being normal again. (the picture is only the next morning after the surgery with still some dry blood on the lip but healing well!) I was filled with thankfulness that we could help him on his road to full recovery.

I saw a young woman in her early twenties who presented with a tumor on her abdominal wall. It had been excised twice before elsewhere, but kept on growing. The most recent histology showed that it was a cancer (dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans), a serious cancer but fortunately no evidence of spread of the cancer by the time I saw her.

I was able to do a wide excision, removing the full thickness of the abdominal wall, (subsequent histology showed that the cancer was completely removed) and reconstructing the abdominal wall to cover the bowel and bladder that was left exposed after the excision. I reconstructed the muscles with a fascia and muscle flap from the side of her upper leg.



Tumor (recurrent cancer) pre- surgery



Healing post reconstruction

She has been recovering well and will soon be discharged home. Again, so thankful that we are in a privileged position to change what was 'too little too late' into a positive final outcome. Sadly, there are so many that will never have the opportunity.

It is such a huge privilege to be involved in these patients' lives. To live out my Call despite sometimes very difficult living and working circumstances; broken showers I have to try and fix myself, lack of internet, food challenges, no electricity frequently and for long hours, limited instrumentation, very little suture materials to choose from, but we survive it in His grace 😊 and many more things to be thankful for!

NEWS SHORTS:

- **Introducing new PAACS Director of Partnership Development:** PAACS is excited to announce the addition of Deborah (Deb) Pedziwol to our team. Deb will be stepping into the role of Director of Partnership Development.

Transitioning to PAACS from the CMDA Stewardship Development Team, Deb brings to PAACS over 20 years of business acumen spanning the industries of Banking, Telecommunications, and Manufacturing. Her experience has been focused on Client Relationship Management, Project Implementation Management, Compliance, and Quality Analysis, with extensive experience in strategic data/ performance trending which supported both on-shore and international business relationships.



Deb holds a BS Communications degree from East Tennessee State University and MS Communications degree from Northwestern University, as well as professional certifications from Villanova University in Project Management and Lean Six Sigma Blackbelt.

A native of East Tennessee, an educator, and a business professional, Deb has had the opportunity to live her philosophy around the world: “you can give a man a fish and feed him for a day – you can teach a man how to fish and feed him for life”. She has completed assignments in the Philippines, Germany, Jamaica, and Guatemala. Throughout her career, Deb has trusted God to lead the way in her life, in rearing her children and in the direction for her career. This is an understanding that brought her to this new opportunity in PAACS. Deb is very excited to be part of an organization involved in training for future sustainability and one that invests in training and discipling surgeons in Africa to glorify God and provide excellent, compassionate care to those most in need - a legacy!

Join me in welcoming Deb to PAACS. Her email address is Deborah.Pedziwol@paacs.net.

- **Zoë Mbanzabugabo**, born to Elvis and Delphine in Niger, was found to have a ‘hole in her heart’ – an intraventricular septal defect. This hole results in a heart malfunction termed “congestive heart failure”. Without surgical closure of this hole soon, this heart malfunction will become life threatening.



Elvis and Delphine hail from Burundi, but have come to Niger for Elvis to complete a five-year surgical residency with the PAACS (Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons) program at SIM Galmi Hospital. He was in his third year of training at the time of Zoé’s diagnosis.

No hospital in Niger offers the specialized ultrasound and pediatric cardiac surgery consultants that Zoé requires for her medical care. Contact was made with a team who visits Tenwek Hospital to offer these services

in Kenya. Zoé has a good prognosis if she is able to receive this care that she needs.

Joe Starke, PAACS Program Director, spearheaded a fund-raising effort using GoFundMe to raise

but Tresor and Blandine stayed at Banso when the others went back because of the impending birth.



- **Birth Announcement:** 2016 PAACS graduate Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy and his wife, Iasy, report the birth of their fourth child, ANDRIAMIALINTSOA Miangola Keren. The little girl was born shortly after midnight on 21 August weighing 3 KG (6.6 pounds) and measuring 43 cm (16.9 in) and both mother and child are doing well. Little Miangola Keren has three siblings to help take care of her: Fitia, Noah and Rinah.

- **Mark your calendar** for the following events you may wish to attend:
 - **Prescription for Renewal**, October 12 – 14, 2018. In addition to the usual program of spiritual encouragement focused on medical missions, Dr. Lou Zirkle will oversee a SIGN nail course on the Saturday afternoon. Register at <https://www.samaritanspurse.org/our-ministry/prescription-for-renewal/>
 - **American College of Surgeons PAACS/CMDA Reception**, Monday October 22, 2018. It will be held from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM at the Sheraton Boston Hotel, 39 Dalton Street, Boston, MA in Room Liberty A. Please respond to Margaret.cioch@paacs.net by October 8th if you plan to attend.
 - **PAACS Commission and Council meetings** will be held November 2-3 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Des Plaines, IL. Commission, Specialty Council and PAACS Committee members are invited to attend this meeting. All PAACS Program Directors and faculty in the US at the time are also invited to attend. We are asking that the Program Directors and faculty let us know (susan.koshy@paacs.net) that they will be in the US because we would like them to present about their program at the meeting.
 - **Global Health Mission Conference**, Louisville, Kentucky, November 8 – 10, 2018. Register at <https://www.medicalmissions.com/events/gmhc-2018>. The sister conference, **Remedy**, will be held March 28 – 20, 2019 at the First Baptist Orlando Church in Florida.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Pray for all the residents who will be taking the written Membership and Fellowship examinations for COSECSA on Wednesday, September 5. Fifteen PAACS residents, one Kijabe-Cure Ortho resident

and one previous PAACS graduates are slated to write the MCS exam. Nine PAACS residents will be writing the FCS exam.

- Praise God for the graduation at the PAACS-Galmi Program. Pray for wisdom for him as he eventually leaves his place of training and returns to wherever God would have Him serve.
- Pray for the resident selection process that will take place this month – approximately 28 people will be selected! Pray that God will lead the right men and women to this training program and that the program directors and their teams will make the right decision as led by the Spirit.
- Please pray for the residents and faculty surgeons who have been reunited with the Mbingo Baptist Hospital. Thank God for the present peace and pray that it will continue. Please continue to pray for safety for all PAACS personnel, their families and all the hospital employees. Pray that PAACS will have the wisdom about all the decisions in the future. Pray for Dr. Nigo who is remaining at Banso for the time being until he returns to the DRC.
- Pray for the civil unrest in Ethiopia and for the missionaries there. Pray that peace will come – both physical peace between warring factions and spiritual peace from the Spirit.
- Please continue to pray that God will call additional career surgeons to join the PAACS faculties. The manpower situations in Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, and Niger are particularly of concern and some situations (Ethiopia, Malawi and Niger) are critical.
- Pray for those faculty members on home assignment in September (David Halter, Tim Berg, Rich Davis, Jeff Lane, Sean Dupont, Zach and Jen O'Connor, Ryan Hayton and Debbie Eisenhut in the USA) – for their rest, for the times of speaking and fund-raising and for the times of medical work. Pray for the programs which must cover their absence.
- Pray that Niger will provide the visa in a timely fashion so that the Duponts can return to Niger with their baby.
- Pray for Jason Axt and his family – they hit the 100% support level, received their visas the day they were scheduled to take off (August 27) and are now in France for 10 months in language school.
- We ask again for special prayer for Adam Davis. Rich Davis and his family had just arrived home for their regularly scheduled home assignment when their oldest son, Adam, was admitted with a diagnosis of heart failure due to viral myocarditis. He is now home but recovery may take months to years. Please pray for comfort for Rich, Stacy and the family, for healing for Adam and for wisdom for his physicians. Pray for Rich as he tries to accomplish his projects at Kijabe but from a distance.
- Praise God that funds were raised quickly for young Zoé. Pray for the travel, the surgery and hospitalization and for complete healing.
- Pray about a health issue for Dr. Thelander – that the right decision will be made about surgery versus non-operative therapy and for healing from this problem.

Editor: Bruce C. Steffes, MD, MBA, MA, FACS, FWACS, FCS(ECSA), FICS