

Dear Colleagues,

*The transformation of a generalist into a general surgeon is especially interesting when a resident comes from a place where 75% of the surgical knowledge and skills he learns during his residency are known to only a few privileged individuals. With every graduation, PAACS is transforming that landscape.*

*This month, five PAACS surgeons have graduated from our training programs in Cameroon and Gabon. They will serve in their home countries of Liberia, Guinea, Mali, DR Congo, and Cameroon. As they solemnly marched towards their diplomas to the rising music of "Pomp and Circumstance", the memories of their trembling hands and fumbling fingers faded from even their professors' memories! Gone were the tongues that stammered on rounds, the eyes that blurred over reading assignments, and the panic that froze them when faced with unexpected bleeding.*

*There is only enough space in this issue to glance at these wonderful celebrations and they represent a fraction of what God is doing every day as we train the next 40 future surgeons for Africa. May the stories and reports in this bulletin give you joy and challenge you afresh to be a part of what God is doing to change healthcare in Africa.*

The Editors



## The Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS)

BULLETIN #110

July 2013



"Changing the spiritual and physical health of a continent"

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.

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

Benjamin Malikidogo is helped by Dr. Michael Stathis, an Australian general surgeon and ex-missionary, working at Mbingo Baptist Hospital

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## PAACS WRITTEN EXAM GIVEN

The annual PAACS in-service exam for the PAACS residents was held the first weekend of July. Forty residents sat the exam. The overall passage rate was 15 of 20 on the senior level and 15 of 20 on the junior level. All but one of the substandard scores were close to the benchmark and it is expected that they will perform adequately on the remediation exam scheduled for the last Saturday of August.



Residents at Soddo Hospital, part of PAACS-Ethiopia, prepare to take their written PAACS exam.

The highest score on the senior exam was Elijah Mwaura, a fourth year resident of Tenwek, followed closely by Dejene Desalegn, a third year resident of PAACS-Ethiopia. The highest score on the junior exam was Moges Mulu of PAACS-Ethiopia just ahead of John Kanyi of Tenwek. For the first year residents, Efeson Thomas and Surafel Mulutu, both of PAACS Ethiopia, tied for the highest score.

The 2014 exam will be moved one month earlier so that the first Saturday of June will be the scheduled exam day and the last Saturday of July the scheduled day for remediation.

The KR-20 score, a measure of reliability for examinations, was .90 for the junior exam and .79 for the senior exam. The test was written to a pre-established blueprint to assure validity.



Some residents have differing approaches to exams. Names are withheld to protect the guilty!

## PAACS-WACS ORAL EXAMS HELD

On Saturday, July 13, oral examinations were held for the graduating PAACS residents from Gabon and Cameroon at the Mutengene Hospital, an hour's drive from Douala, Cameroon. Professor O.O. Mbonu and Professor K-D.T. Yawe of the West African College of Surgery (WACS) were external examiners for this exam. Program Directors Steve Sparks, Jim Brown and Keir Thelander; PAACS Executive Director Bruce Steffes and PAACS Commissioner



Mifila presents a long case at Mutengene Hospital to Professor Yawe, Dr. Ndasi and Dr. Thelander

Professor Wayne Koch; as well as PAACS graduate Henry Ndasi participated in the examination process.

The exam process mirrored the existing WACS exam process and is highly reflective of the old British exams of the past. The exam process consisted of four parts: short cases, long cases and a two-part oral examination (the “viva voce”) in which the first part was on basic surgical principles and the second part was on clinical surgical cases and pathology. Each session was 20 minutes and the examinee was in front of three examiners.



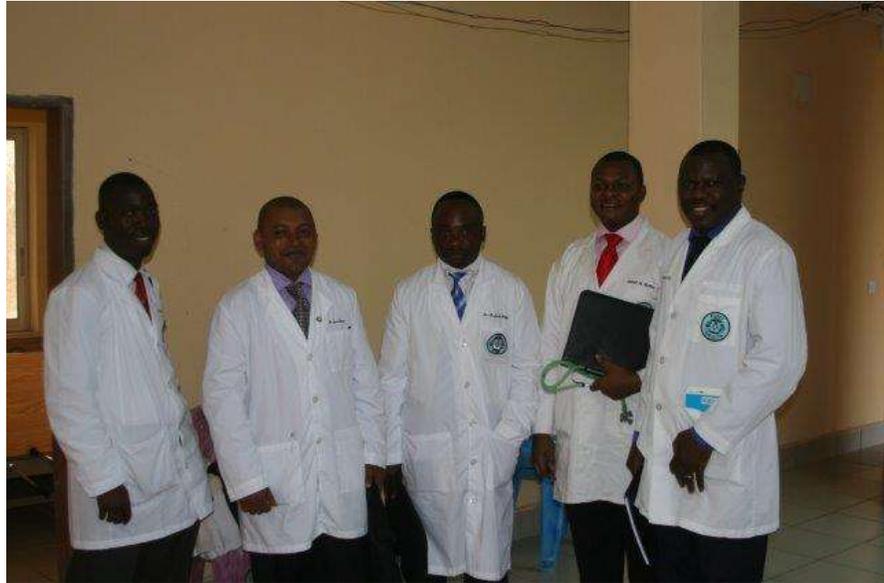
Front row: Keir Thelander, O. Mbonu, Jerry Brown, Gerald Ekwen, DeGaulle Mifila; second row: Bruce Steffes, Jim Brown, KD Terna Yawe; Back row: Wayne Koch, Steve Sparks, Ruffin Loua, Philadelphie Dembele, Henry Ndasi.

“Short cases” consisted of a focused examination without any history taking. The diagnosis was relatively easily made and the examinee answered questions about it and other related conditions. Usually the questions were focused on a differential diagnosis and a diagnostic and therapeutic plan from that point onward. The short cases this time included: a thyroid mass, a pediatric hernia, cryptorchidism, giant fibroadenoma, submental mass, venous ulcers, a tib-fib fracture with external fixator, a post-op thigh mass and an empyema with a bronchopleural fistula (and subcutaneous emphysema). The examinee had to get through three cases and doing more would be to his credit. The technique of physical examination counted heavily in the final grade.

The “long cases” were a simple history and physical followed by an end-depth discussion of the case, differential diagnosis and various surgical options for the condition. The examinee was given 45 minutes to do the history and physical and then presented the patient to the three examiners. The ability to gather and integrate data was the most important consideration.

The third “viva voce” is identical to the oral exams that N. American surgeons are familiar with. The first part was on the principles of surgery and the second part on pathology, surgical technique and advanced surgical thinking.

Eighty percent (4/5) passed this exam – a higher percentage than is usual with the WACS exam. Congratulations are given to Dr. Gerald Ekwen, Dr. DeGaulle Mifila, Dr. Jerry Brown and Dr. Philadelphie Dembele.



**Jerry Brown, Gerald Ekwen, DeGaulle Mifila, Ruffin Loua, Philadelphie Dembele**

Since not all graduates this year will have had this exam, it will be factored into all other evaluations and exams and a failing grade will not necessarily preclude graduation. The exam was primarily for a learning experience for them, for PAACS and to demonstrate to WACS the quality of our residents.

Despite the good performance, Professor Mbonu (previous Chairman of all the surgical faculties of WACS and past -president of WACS) and Professor Yawe (presently the head of the surgical faculty of WACS) informed us that there remain roadblocks in the acceptance of our graduates by WACS. Steffes stated, “Some of the remaining hurdles are philosophical differences and some are financial, time and travel. Their recommendations will be given due consideration by the PAACS Commission.”

Steffes would like to express deep appreciation for all the study and work put in by the examinees and examining committee and a special word of thanks goes to Dr. Ndasi for handling all the logistics.

## **MBINGO GRADUATION**

The graduation ceremony for three PAACS residents and two CIMS (Christian Internal Medicine Specialization) residents was held at the Mbingo Baptist Hospital near Bamenda, Cameroon. Jerry Fahnloe Brown was the 26<sup>th</sup> graduate from PAACS and since Gerald Ekwen and DeGaulle Mifila will not be actually finished until December, they will be the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>th</sup> PAACS graduate respectively.

The graduation was the occasion for great pomp and circumstance. It was held in the festively decorated chapel. Officials from the Cameroonian Baptist Convention, the government, PAACS and CIMS participated in the program. The hospital administrator (Ngi Richard), the chief medical officer (Nana Christopher – orthopedics) and other hospital officials helped facilitate the program. Wayne Koch (PAACS Commissioner and ENT surgeon at Johns Hopkins) opened in prayer. There were many officials and dignitaries who also greeted the crowd: Dr. David Strycker from Tandala Hospital, DRC (where Mifila will go to serve); Bruce Steffes, Executive Director of PAACS; Mr. Joseph Chebonkeng Kalabubse,

Cameroon Baptist Convention President; His Excellency Ni John Fru Ndi, Chairman of the Social Democratic Front (Political party); Prof Chia, Vice chancellor Cameroon Christian University and Dr Wefuan Jonah, Internist/Board chairman CBC Health Services. The Prime Minister, American Ambassador and other dignitaries had been invited but were unable to make the celebration. Professor Tih Pius Muffih, the Director of the Cameroonian Baptist Convention's Health Services, gave the commencement address. The program directors, Steve Sparks and Dennis Palmer, awarded the diplomas and after that, each of the five honorees gave an address to the crown. Dave Thompson, PAACS Director for Africa gave the charge to the graduates. After the program was finished, pictures were taken.



Jerry Fahnloe Brown will be returning to Liberia to work at the ELWA hospital outside of Monrovia. Micky and I remember well his visit to the Mercy Ship 8 years ago when we interviewed him as part of his application. DeGaulle Mifila, from the DRC, and Gerald Ekwen, from Cameroon, will not be finished until December. Mifila and Ekwen began their program five years ago in December at the Ngaoundéré program and followed their program director Jim Smith to Mbingo when the program closed there. Mifila will be going to remote Tandala Hospital (being renovated by the Evangelical Free Church) in the far eastern part of the DRC. Ekwen will be staying here in Cameroon, going to the Mutengene Hospital where he will work with another Cameroonian PAACS graduate, Dr. Henry Ndasi.

The graduation was videoed and a report was shown on the evening news on

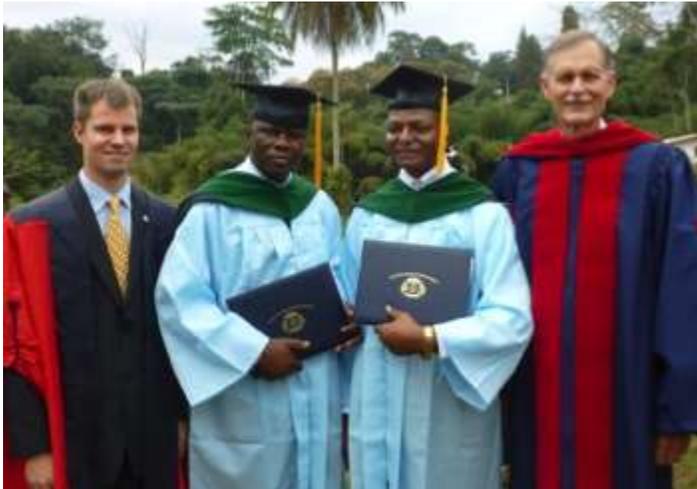


national television each night July 22 – 26.

CIMS is a training program started about five years ago by Dr. Dennis Palmer, a 65 year old internist who has spent his entire professional life as a Baptist medical missionary in Cameroon. It is similar to PAACS in concept but thus far limited only to Cameroon and this one location. As far as is known, it is the only Christian internal medicine training program in Africa.

## GABON GRADUATION

PAACS held its 9th graduation ceremony and celebration at Bongolo Hospital on July 28 for Dr. Philadelphie Dembele (Mali) and Dr. Ruffin Loua (Guinea-Conakry), the 9th and 10th graduates from Bongolo (27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> from PAACS).



Left to right: Program Director Keir Thelander, Dr. Dembele Philadelphie, Dr. Ruffin Loua, and Dr. David Thompson.



Dr. Elisee Baroua and Dr. Wendy Hofman

During the same ceremony, Bongolo Hospital's 3-year ophthalmology training program (POB) graduated its first ophthalmology resident, Dr. Elisee Baroua, from the DRC. Dr. Wendy Hofman is the Program Director. Approximately 400 guests attended the combined 4½ hour graduation and Sunday morning church service. After, the honored guests, residents and their families were provided a delicious meal. As the meal was readied, the hospital invited the government officials who attended to watch two short presentations, one about PAACS and the other about the ophthalmology training programs at the hospital. They were then invited to ask questions. The officials were pleased to learn that for the past three years, the PAACS faculty and residents have regularly attended meetings and presented papers at the bi-annual meetings of the Gabonese surgical society (SOGACHIR) held in Libreville, the capital city. Dr. Simplicie Tchoba, the first Gabonese PAACS resident, is also involved in an effort by SOGACHIR to create a surgical journal for Central Africa.

Invited guests were impressed with the newly-opened emergency department and pediatrics clinic at Bongolo Hospital, both of which have significantly improved outpatient and emergency services.



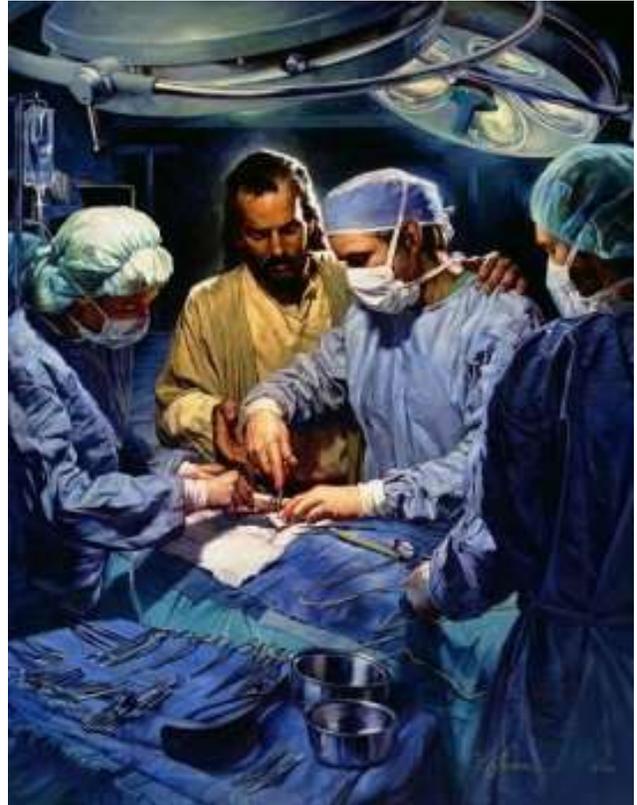
Left: Dr. Dembele receives his PAACS diploma.

Right: The PAACS/POB family of Bongolo



Above left: Dr. Renee Valach (internal medicine/pediatrics) talks with Becki Thompson in the new 8-bed Emergency Department. Above right: New pediatric OPD and observation area.

## LIFE IMITATES ART



Dr. Lance Plyler, Dr. John Potts (a Canadian volunteer with Samaritan's Purse) and the OR crew create a tableau resembling the famous painting by Nathan Greene, "Chief of the Medical Staff" in the operating theater at the hospital at "Baptist Haiti Mission". They were serving in 2010 in the aftermath of the earthquake there.

## COSECSA INSPECTS SIM-GALMI HOSPITAL

A team from the College of Surgery of East, Central and Southern Africa visited the SIM hospital in Galmi Niger July 25 - 27 in order to accredit it. Dr. Pankaj Jani, Professor of Surgery from Nairobi, Kenya and Professor Emile Rwamasirabo, Professor of Urology at King Feisal Hospital in Kigali, Rwanda, made up the team. They flew from their respective countries to Addis and then to Niamey, Nigeria. Dr. Joe Starke, program director, met them in Niamey and escorted them in the mission plane for the remaining flight to remote Galmi Hospital.

Starke, Yakoubou Sanoussi (Assistant Program Director) and all the rest of the hospital worked hard to wrap up preparations for the COSECSA site visit. The hospital and grounds have undergone several rounds of deep cleaning, the emergency room was remodeled, they added a medical high density care unit, painted the medical ward, added new OR lights, new monitors, more oxygen cylinders, a FNA/touch prep station for telepathology, and they started the roof on the new OB building. Recent completion of the surgical ward and ICU, digital radiology suite, and renovation of the emergency room were highlights

of the facilities review. Dr. Jani and Dr. Rwamasirabo gave valuable recommendations as to future development strategies for the hospital and residency program.

Joe Starke wrote, "Their evaluation was very positive and they will report their findings to the COSECSA Counsel in 2 weeks for approval. The team at Galmi is excited for the opportunity to be a part of an organization with such a strong commitment to surgical education in Africa.

Poor internet bandwidth prevented the e-mailing of pictures before publication – they will be included in a follow-up story in the August PAACS Bulletin. The report of the meeting in Lusaka will also be reported then.

All present PAACS programs have been accredited fully and the planned program at Arusha Lutheran Medical Center in Arusha, Tanzania, due to open in January, 2014, has already received full accreditation. Such accreditation is not necessary for the planned program at Harpur Memorial Hospital in Menouf, Egypt, also due to open in January, since COSECSA is not recognized in Egypt.

## SHORT-TERM FACULTY DEEPLY APPRECIATED

Each year, at the end of the academic year, an "in-kind" for short-termers report is accomplished and submitted to Christian Medical Dental Associations as is required by the Internal Revenue Service. This year represented another record-breaking effort by the short-term faculty who make PAACS happen.

Dave Thompson, the PAACS Director for Africa, stated emphatically, "PAACS would not be the organization it is and certainly the training would not of the caliber that it is without the great input provided by short-term missionaries who give up their time and money to serve. They are a great blessing to the residents and the patients and we career missionaries are very grateful for the things we learn from our colleagues in other specialties." Those who served are a real blessing to PAACS and we cannot thank you enough – and invite you back! For those who have not served with these wonderful residents, now is a good time to start!

	<u># of Volunteers</u>	<u># of days</u>
Bongolo	12	122
Kijabe General Surgery	12	336
Soddo/MCH	22	363
Mbingo	34	599
Tenwek	76	1,315
Kijabe Pediatric Surgery	9	180
Galmi	<u>10</u>	<u>124</u>
Totals – 2012-2013	<b>175</b>	<b>3,039</b>
Totals from 2011-2012	<b>146</b>	<b>2,542</b>
Totals from 2010-2011	<b>109</b>	<b>2,304</b>

The total value of the donated services, as calculated for the IRS, was \$3,163,000.

<u>Specialty:</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Specialty:</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Cardiothoracic Surgery	1	Pediatric urology	1
ENT	5	Plastic Surgery	2
ENT (Resident)	1	Pediatric ENT	1
Oral/Maxillofacial	1	Urology	3
General Surgery	31	Ob/Gyn	13
General Surgery Resident	2	Ob/Gyn Resident	2
General Surgery/Trauma	1	Anesthesia	12
Surgical Oncology	2	Gastroenterology	10
Head & Neck	4	Radiology	17
Neurosurgery	7	Cardiologist	4
Neurology	1	Hematology/Oncology	1
Orthopedic	33	Emergency Medicine	1
Ortho/Hand	2	ICU	2
Ortho/Peds	1	Vascular Surgery	2
Pediatric Surgery	12	Totals	<b>175</b>

## NEWS SHORTS:

- Report from Gimbi SDA Hospital:** Arega Fekadu, a December 2012 graduate of the PAACS program at Tenwek, reports from Gimbi, Ethiopia: “Despite all the challenges, in the past 6 months God has helped me so much. I saw over 4000 out patients, did 1215 operations of which 567 were major operations. Three esophagectomies; one total laryngectomy; 5 radical cystoprostatectomies with ileal conduit; 8 thoracotomies of which 4 were for decortication, two for lobectomy for bleeding fungal ball; and one huge leaking SFA (superficial femoral artery) aneurysm with saphenous vein graft are among many surgeries and with excellent out comes. I did 163 flexible upper GI endoscopies and colonoscopies, over 1000 ultrasounds and many orthopedic procedures. Basically, the hospital is serving as referral center for West Ethiopian region. Above all, the most important thing is most of these patients came to know Jesus Christ as their own personal savior or knew Him better and renewed their relationship.”

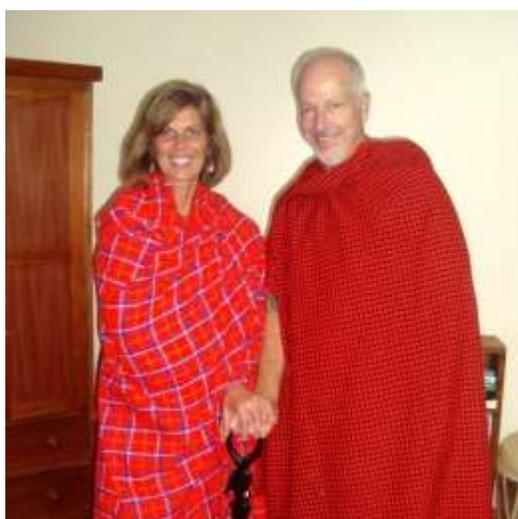
He went on to explain the financial income of a new surgeon on a mission hospital without one, “In addition, the hospital financial reserves grew from 26,000 ETB (1,300 USD) when I arrived at the hospital to 6.1million ETB (300,000 USD) at the end of June.”

*[Editor’s note: Arega’s story is not uncommon. PAACS surgeons are making a huge impact on the populations they serve and upon the hospitals at which they serve. We are attempting to try to measure that impact over the next year in order to demonstrate the validity and importance of what PAACS is doing. But more importantly, it demonstrates that PAACS is limited in what it can do. An educational program, it cannot solve all the infrastructure and manpower issues for all of Africa. We do not have the resources or manpower either. If God is calling you to come alongside our graduates, please do so by working with them and the hospitals where they are. Most of all, pray for them regularly, for their relationships, for their families and for their health. It*

*is hard to keep things in proper perspective when you are exhausted. Pray as well as their ability to share the Gospel and “be Christ with skin on”.]*

- **PAACS Surgeon Leaves Mission Field:** Dr Harry Kraus and his wife Kris left Kijabe Mission Hospital on 15th July. He has served in Kijabe since 2004 with a break between 2008 and 2010. He was a member of the PAACS surgery faculty at Kijabe hospital. Harry is a board certified general and vascular surgeon and an accomplished writer with many titles to his name. He is relocating to the Williamsburg area of Virginia.

A farewell dinner on 10th July 2012 was given by his surgical colleagues (see picture). He will be dearly missed. As a reversal of the usual custom, Kraus gave each of the residents a copy of his latest book which is set in Kijabe. The novel is entitled “A Heartbeat Away”.



Kris and Harry Kraus model their gifts of Masai blankets in the traditional red.



The Kraus' surrounded by the PAACS Surgical Team at Kijabe

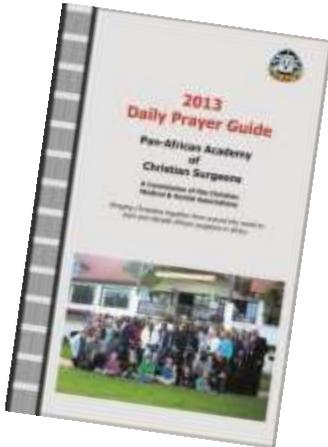
- **Mbingo Continues to Seek Government Recognition:** On July 23, a team made up of Professor Pius Tih (head of the Cameroonian Baptist Convention's health services), Dr. Dennis Palmer (career missionary and head of the Christian Internal Medicine Specializations program at Mbingo Baptist Hospital), Dr. Jim Brown (chief of surgery and assistant PAACS program director at Mbingo) and Bruce Steffes (Executive Director of PAACS) traveled to the capital city of Yaoundé to again press its case for recognition before the Minister of High Education. The application was made in 2009 and no definite decision had yet been made.

The Minister was unable to meet with them, but the team met with the Secretary-General of the ministry, his deputy, Dr. NGOMO Horace Manga. Steffes made the verbal argument for the recognition and questions were answered by all. The team was then introduced to Professor Dieudonné PEGNYEMB, the chairman of the new Committee on graduate medical education. There was initially a desire expressed by the officials to have the hospital start over, applying through the new committee. This was felt by the team to promise another several years of

waiting. Later, Professor Pegnyemb came to the position that this old application should not be subject to the new law and he promised to present the matter to the Minister in the near future. There was no date proposed for an answer. The team requests pray that this answer will both affirmative and timely.

The Gabon PAACS program continues to actively seek government recognition.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:



- 2013 Fall Prayer Guide Available:** The electronic version of the 2013 Fall Prayer Guide can be downloaded from the following URL: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/t90nzpu9i0qwwq8/PAACS%20Prayer%20Guide%202013.pdf>. It has been sent to the printer and hard copies will be available in late August. There are 60 pages of pictures and information. Download it to your laptop computer, your I-Pad or your smart-phone – and use it daily!
- Dereje Lemma Withdraws:** Dereje Lemma, a selected candidate for the new class of trainees at PAACS-Ethiopia was unable to obtain his release from the government. He has withdrawn. A replacement candidate is being sought.

- Another PAACS Child: Benazir,** the first child of Dr. and Mrs. Yves Mpongo, was born on June 22nd weighing in at 2750 grams (about 6 pounds). A strong and healthy baby girl, she is very different from many newborns born at Galmi. Benazir means "matchless" or "incomparable."



- PAACS Logo-wear:** If you would like to have something from the company Land's End made for you with the PAACS logo, please contact Terri McLamb ([terry.mclamb@paacs.net](mailto:terry.mclamb@paacs.net)) who can send you the instructions to have it made.
- Home Assignments:** The following PAACS surgeons have or will soon returned from their home assignment: Erik Hansen, Jon Pollock, Rich Davis and Chi Chung. Carol Spears is now on home assignment.
- Help Needed at Soddo:** Paul Gray, Program Director at Soddo and one of only two surgeons there, will be on home assignment December 2013 until the end of March 2014. He requests help

for those four months. If any general surgeon can assist them during this time, please contact Dr. Gray at [paul.gray@paacs.net](mailto:paul.gray@paacs.net).

- **Coverage Needed at ALL the Programs in 2014:** The CMDA Continuing Medical and Dental Education conference will be held April 28 – May 8, 2014. Virtually all of our faculty and our fourth and fifth year residents would like to attend. If you can cover at your favorite mission hospital during this two week stretch so they can attend to obtain CME credit, rest, spiritual refreshment and meet with PAACS, it would be so very much appreciated. Please put this on your calendar and notify your favorite Program Director right away..

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for the newly selected PAACS residents and their families are moving to their place of training, sometimes across several countries, and as they face the uncertainty of this new experience. Pray for their wives and families who must adjust to the new culture.
- Pray for the graduates who are returning to their home countries and new work situation. Pray for their peace, for the adaptation of their children and family, for suitable education for their children, for the resources they need to take care of patients and for the opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Pray that Dr. Alliance Nyikuri will receive his certificate of medical licensure, delayed in government bureaucracy.
- Pray for Dr. Wendy Willmore (headed to Arusha, Tanzania), the Dr. David Halter family (headed to Arusha, Tanzania), and Dr. Heath Many and his family (headed to Tenwek Hospital, Kenya). Pray that God will provide them a team of prayer and financial partners and that they will be prepared in record time.
- Pray for the opening of programs at Harpur Memorial Hospital (Egypt), Arusha Lutheran Medical Center (Tanzania) and Malamulo Seventh Day Adventist Hospital (Malawi), all of which hope to open in January. There are many details to work out and which must come together before then.
- Pray that God will call additional career surgeons to join the PAACS faculties at Kijabe Hospital in Kenya, Soddo Christian Hospital in Ethiopia, and Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon.
- Pray that God will call a second pediatric surgeon to join Dr. Eric Hansen at Bethany Kids, Kijabe, Kenya. The program urgently needs two surgeons to continue training its fellows.
- Pray for Dr. Carol Spears on home assignment and for wisdom and God's leading in the decisions she needs to make.
- Pray that both Mbingo Baptist Hospital and Bongolo Hospital will receive the government recognition that they seek.
- Pray that Galmi will receive full accreditation for all five years from COSECSA (College of Surgery of East Central and Southern Africa).

- Pray for those preparing for the remediation exam for PAACS (August 31) and for those preparing for the written MCS and FCS exams for COSECSA (September 4).
- Praise God for each of the short-term surgeons and physicians who came and helped last year and pray that even more will come this year. Pray that some will be called to cover the home assignment for Paul Gray at Soddo and for all of faculty next year for the CMDA-CMDE Conference.

Editors:

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David Thompson, MD, FACS, FWACS