



Welcome to the 4th edition of the PAACS Alumni Newsletter, which celebrates our PAACS alumni and their service throughout Africa. This month we feature Dr. Tewodros Tamiru and Dr. Chukwudi Okorie, both of whom are mentoring and teaching future surgical leaders in their home countries of Ethiopia and Nigeria. We also are excited by the strong response we received from our graduates with our first ever PAACS Alumni Survey. We are gathering this additional data so that we can tell their stories to the PAACS family. Seventy percent of our alumni responded and some of what we learned is shared in this issue. We thank all of our graduates for their commitment to PAACS and serving the surgical needs of the people of Africa. Let us rejoice to the Lord for these many blessings.

— Thomas C Robey, MD
Editor; trobey@mcw.edu

The Most Important Word

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. – John 1:14



by Stan Key,
PAACS Spiritual Dean

Called Home to Serve Nigeria

— Chukwudi Okorie, MD

Dr. Chukwudi Okorie endeavors “to be a witness of Christ’s love to his patients and co-workers on a daily basis” as he trains future urologists at both the Federal Teaching Hospital and at Ebonyi State University in Abakaliki, Nigeria. Chuku was born and raised in Nigeria before heading off to medical school and a urology surgical residency program at Rostov Medical University in Russia. In 2002, he joined the Banso Baptist Hospital staff in Cameroon as a practicing urologist. PAACS subsequently opened up a general surgery training program at Banso Hospital the following year, and Dr. Okorie decided to apply for additional training in general surgery. He was accepted and graduated from Banso in 2007. Dr. Okorie states that his additional training with PAACS, “equipped me to serve the population much better, not just as a skilled surgeon but more importantly as a compassionate one. Furthermore, the additional training gave me the leverage and versatility to tackle many more surgical diseases and remains a strong source of inspiration for my current practice in my primary area of specialization.”



After graduation, Dr. Okorie served at Tenwek Hospital in Kenya as a PAACS faculty member and as Director of Urological Surgery. Eventually the Lord called him to return to Nigeria to serve his home nation and to start training his country’s future urologists. His daily routine includes morning reviews, teaching rounds, outpatient clinic and his surgical workload. His long-term goals are to continue the effort to bring surgery to the Nigerian people as a ministry of God’s love. He has been developing cost effective,

simplified and safe surgical procedures and protocols to improve urologic care in Africa. A number of his protocols have been published and implemented in many other PAACS affiliated hospitals throughout Africa. His research is focused on working with medical engineers interested in developing cost effective surgical instruments so that urological surgery can be brought to the masses in Africa. Like most academic physicians, he struggles with the heavy workload of clinical activity and teaching duties, balancing work and family time and the burden of how to help the many needy patients in Nigeria access surgical care.

Dr. Okorie’s wife, Caroline, is also a physician in Nigeria and they have three children: Kelechi (age 13), Ikechi (age 11) and Chioma (age 9). Dr. Okorie requests prayer for God’s continued guidance for his family and continued health and strength for his family as well as for the wider

PAACS family. He and his family remain very grateful to the numerous friends, teachers and mentors they met during their PAACS training and continue to remember them in their prayers. PAACS is not officially present in Nigeria, but Dr. Okorie prays that some day PAACS will start a surgical residency in Nigeria so that he can have the joy of training more PAACS residents in urology. He states, “The spiritual strength and the enormous case volume that PAACS affords its residents would certainly be an added advantage if PAACS someday attains recognition and partnership with the training bodies of Nigeria.” In the meantime, Dr. Okorie is doing his part in extending the PAACS spirit into Nigeria – for that, we are very thankful and praise God!

Bible scholar William Barclay says John 1:14 might be “the greatest single verse in the New Testament.” Without opening up a debate about whether or not you agree with him, let me ask a question: As you look at this amazing verse, which word would you say is the most important? Strangely enough, I’ve come to regard the humble little conjunction “and” as the most important word. So if, as Barclay suggests, John 1:14 is the greatest single verse, I suppose you could say I believe the most important word in the Bible is “and”. The word occurs four times here, but I’m talking about the final usage where John speaks of Jesus being “full of grace and truth.” Jesus wasn’t full of grace or truth, but both together. Truth without grace is a hammer, coercion. Grace without truth is sloppy agape, sentimentalism. Jesus was full of grace and truth. By holding together in himself what appeared to be incompatible opposites, and by living in the tension rather than trying to resolve it, Jesus lived a life never seen before. By doing so, he made possible the redemption of the world!

The Gospels show us what the fullness of grace and the fullness of truth look like when mixed together in the life of one perfect person. In Jesus’ words and actions we see an amazing tapestry of truthful grace and graceful truth, woven together in a way that both realities are recognizable, but neither is quite what it was before. Jesus made it look so easy, so effortless. But don’t be fooled. To live in the paradoxical tension of grace and truth is to live in the constant reality of pain. Nowhere is this more evident than on the cross. There, grace and truth collided in furious intensity, but the fusion made possible the redemption of the world. If Jesus had opted for grace or truth, there would have been no pain. There would have been no cross. And there would have been no redemption. It is the marriage of grace and truth that makes the Gospel possible. This is why I believe the word “and” is the most important word in the Bible.

Jesus sent his disciples into the world saying, “As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.” God intends for us too to be full of grace and truth. So let’s go in the power of his Spirit and live out the genius of the and.

PAACS Faculty Surgeon

– Tewodros Tamiru, MD

Dr. Tewodros Tamiru, or “Tedi” as he is known to the PAACS family, is currently a PAACS faculty surgeon at Soddo Christian Hospital (SCH) in Ethiopia. He is married to Addis Eskindir and has two children, Bethel (age 6) and Mehanaim (age 4). Dr. Tamiru and his wife were both born in eastern Ethiopia in the town of Asebeteferi (Chiro). Tedi was raised in central Ethiopia with his two brothers and four sisters. His father was an elementary teacher and his mom was a housewife. Tedi received his medical school education at Addis Ababa University. After he graduated, he practiced as a general practitioner at Bale Goba Zonal Hospital where he met Addis. After developing an interest in surgery, Tedi went on to do his PAACS General Surgery residency at SCH graduating in 2012. Reflecting back on his training years, Dr. Tamiru stated, “It was a hard time of studying



but a good spiritual environment which made me a good Christian surgeon. It gave me the heart to serve the needy despite some personal discomforts and unmet needs.” In addition to developing his surgical skills, Tedi grew spiritually through weekly bible studies and hospital chapel services and with the help of his church fellowship. He still keeps in contact with many of his fellow residents today.

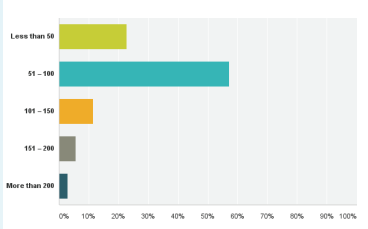
After graduation, Tedi initially practiced as a general surgeon back at Bale Goba Zonal Hospital, where he had served previously as a GP. This hospital served a large metropolitan area with a predominantly Muslim population of nearly 800,000 people. Before long however, the Lord called him back to Soddo. While debating on what he should do at that time, Tedi reflected on his own training and realized, “that duplicating oneself is more rewarding than working alone and keeps you from burning out and eventually leaving the area.” Tedi returned to SCH as a PAACS faculty surgeon and has since helped solidify their surgical training program. Currently, Tedi is mentoring the next class of PAACS residents at Soddo to grow into compassionate, Christian surgeons who are ready to serve those in need. In the

beginning, hospital staff still treated him like a resident but with time, he said, he earned their respect and trust as a faculty surgeon. He starts each day with morning rounds with his residents and then is off to guide them in surgery clinic and in the operating room. He shares call with his partners every other week. Each day he implements his Christian faith by sharing the good news and praying with his patients. Dr. Tamiru reports that PAACS is having a profound impact on surgical training in Ethiopia. “PAACS is very different from other surgical programs in Ethiopia by giving you the opportunity to develop in yourself the life of giving to those in need with love. It has become a benchmark for the government on how to start a hospital based surgical residency program.” Dr. Tamiru finds himself currently in a season full of possible transitions. When asked about his long-term goals, Tedi states that God may be calling him to further his surgical training with a fellowship in urology. He is looking into a possible fellowship opportunity for him in Norway. He would then like to come back to Ethiopia to serve his countrymen in his own practice. He desires to keep on serving the Lord with the skills that God has blessed him with and keep on sharing the Good News with his patients and living the truth with love. “I want to finish my run in a way that will glorify Christ.” Please pray for Tedi that he honors the Lord with these decisions and that the Lord shows him which path he and his family should take.

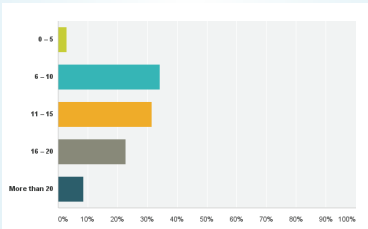


Fun Facts from the PAACS Alumni Survey

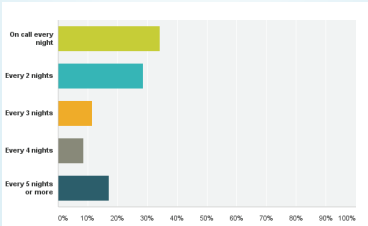
How many patients on average do you see in clinic each week?



How many surgeries on average do you perform each week?



How often are you on call?



Please Pray for Our PAACS Graduates

MALI
Philadelphie Dembele

GUINEA
Faya Bomde Yaradouno
Ruffin Loua

SIERRA LEONE
Aiah Lebbie

LIBERIA
Jerry Brown
Anatole Nzanzu

NIGERIA
Chukwudi Okorie

CAMEROON
Jacques Ebhele
Gerald Ekwen
Domain Fuka
Amos Chege Macharia
Benjamin Malikidogo
Evaristus Njume
Anthony Nesoah
Henry Ndasi
Yali bin Ramazani

GABON
Simplice Tchoba

DRC
Jean Bataneni
Hubert Kakalo

ANGOLA
Paulo Baltazar

SOUTH AFRICA
Mifila Degaulle
Agneta Odera

ETHIOPIA
Frehun Ayele
Segni Bekele
Dejene Desalegn
Solomon Endrias
Daniel Gidabo
Tewodros Tamiru
Haileyesus Tesfaye

KENYA
Elijah Mwaura Chege
Damaris Mbalu
Ken Muma
Tony Mwenyemali
Kamene Mwanzia
George Ngock
Jack Okumu
Philip Blasto Ooko

TANZANIA
Catherine Mung'ong'o
Henry Ine

BURUNDI
Nkeshia Gisita

RWANDA
Ronald Tubasiime

UGANDA
Martin Situma
Ighohwo Etuh

MALAWI
Arega Leta

MADAGASCAR
Heuric Rakotomalala
Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy
Elson Randrianantenaina
Harison Rasamimanana
Roseline Razanamampionona



PAACS Alumni