

Dear Friends of PAACS:

The two greatest needs faced by PAACS right now is the need for both short-term and long-term faculty in the programs. It is now becoming increasingly possible for N. Americans to travel to Africa as the Covid 19 restrictions are lifted – please pray for many to answer God’s call on their heart. And pray that for some that it will be a life-long call to serve. In the summer edition of World Medical Mission’s “On Call” magazine, only 15 short-term surgeons are listed as having served at PAACS hospitals in the last three months. Before Covid, at least 3 times that many would have served. Is God calling you?

It is also time to intensify prayer for those residents taking the COSECSA exams – that they will find the time and focus to study and that they will do well to bring honor to their God and their programs.

Pray for Dr. Thelander and the faculty of the conference to be held in October – there will be many hurdles to overcome in order for the conference to be successful. Pray that Covid doesn’t prevent it!

Pray for the program directors as they select new trainees for January, pray for those men and women as they disrupt their life and move and pray especially for the new programs which will be starting at that time. In all of it, may the Good Lord guide and direct, bringing peace and clarity.

The Editor

**OUR MISSION:**  
PAACS' mission is to glorify God by training and discipling African surgeons and related specialists to become Christ-like leaders and servants providing excellent and compassionate care to those most in need.

**OUR VISION:**  
PAACS envisions a growing number of African surgeons and related specialists living out the Gospel and ministering to the sick.

**PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS**

# PAACS Bulletin

**25 Years**  
PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS  
Training and Discipling African Surgeons for Christ

**Edition #205** **July 2021**

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Dear PAACS Family:

*Happy 1st Anniversary PAACS! Believe it or not, PAACS officially completed one year as an independent ministry. This has been a year filled with excitement, a lot of work but most of all, blessings!*

*Thank you for your faithful support and prayers. I also want to thank the PAACS faculty, leadership, volunteers, and Board of Directors for devotedly serving this ministry and accomplishing the work God placed before you. My appreciation also goes out to my incredible colleagues in the PAACS administration. They worked tirelessly to make this transition into an independent ministry successful and a reality. No task was too big or too small for them. They gave it their all. Thank you MOST OF ALL to Jesus who led the way.*

*This year had its complications and tests as well as blessings. Along with the normal challenges that come in a first year as a ministry, PAACS had the task of addressing issues that grew out of the pandemic. It however caused us to stretch our faith, fold our hands, bow our heads, and get on our knees in prayer. God opened doors, provided financially, creatively solved problems, and helped overcome obstacles that were before us. He taught us to rest in Him as He fought our battles.*

*We look forward to what God will do for PAACS in this next new year as a ministry. We are praying that He will take us to new levels, create greater impact, save more lives and touch generations for the kingdom of God. All for His Glory!*

*Blessings,*

*Susan Koshy, JD, MPH  
Chief Executive Officer  
Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS)*

## SAMARITAN'S PURSE ORTHOPEDIC TEAM VISITS GALMI

On July 2, the 4 passenger SIM-Air Cessna 182 unloaded the first three members of the first post-Covid surgical subspecialty team on the gravel airstrip at SIM-Galmi Hospital. Over the next few days, five more members of the team would come from the US, landing in the capital city of Niamey and being ferried out to Galmi, located in the very dry Sahel area. Luggage was another matter – the heavy luggage that made it to Niger with their owners had to be placed on a bus and carried out with a long bus ride to Galmi. Unfortunately, five bags were misplaced by the airlines (three apparently being returned to Addis) before they were found and eventually delivered. This was problematic because of prospect of five days of limited clothing and cosmetics, but also because each member was carrying at least one or two suitcases filled with critically needed supplies.

The team consisted of team leader (and nurse) Cindy Albertson, orthopedic surgeon and PAACS graduate John Mandela Kojo, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Leland McCluskey, PAACS anesthesiologist Dr. Jayne McGuire, biomedical technician Monte Oitker, scrub technician Yancey Stermer and recovery room nurse Amy Schafer. They are all experienced members of the SP DART (Disaster Assistance Response team) or have participated in an orthopedic surgical outreach in the past. Knowing that there might be a need to support the general surgical service while two residents each day and program director Dr. Yakoubou Sanoussi were involved in the orthopedic cases, Dr. Bruce Steffes came to support the effort, filling in as a general surgery attending and working with the PAACS program and residents. He came alongside PAACS faculty members Dr. Nathan Peterson (ENT) and Dr. Tabetha Bradley (general surgery – who has recently returned to Niger for PO Box 1458 | Palatine, IL 60078 | [www.paacs.net](http://www.paacs.net)

a six-month stint).



Front (L to R): Cindy Albertson, Yancey Stermer, John Mandela Kojo, Monte Oitker and Aimee Schafer.  
Back (L to R): Bruce Steffes, Javne McGuire and Leland McCluskv.

The needed replacement SIGN nails and L-handles were in the missing baggage, so the case order was rearranged to fill in the allotted time in two ORs. Over the 8 operating days, 32 orthopedic patients were operated upon and 4 had two extremities repaired. This exceeded the hoped-for goal of 30 patients. The true purpose of the team's visit was not to perform X number of cases, but to ensure that the residents had a hands-on experience which improved their ability to provide good care to orthopedic patients in the future. That was achieved.

The elective general surgery schedule was cancelled during this time, but the emergency schedule remained very busy with a total of 20 cases on most days and one day over 30 cases (the Friday with the trauma). At the end of the dry season here in the Sahel, typhoid fever is a constant problem and the service averaged almost 10 typhoid patients on the service each day. Repairs of as many as 4 acute perforations were performed each day. At least a dozen severe Ludwig's angina and necrotizing soft-tissue infections of the extremity were admitted during this time, each requiring daily dressing changes and debridement in the operating room.

The second weekend began with a bang! On the last Friday evening, a luxury bus blew a tire and flipped over, skidding a considerable distance. A dozen severely injured patients hit the ER and 8 were dead at the scene. To make matters worse, five other unrelated surgical emergencies came in during the same



time. All hands were on deck as patients were resuscitated, lacerations repairs and washouts of complex extremity wounds were carried out.



The PAACS-Galmi Team with visitors

The specialty team participated in all aspects of the residents' lives including devotions, and daily rounds. The orthopedic surgeons held three x-ray rounds involving previous cases, giving advice and teaching points. Steffes carried out four sessions of mock orals – two for the junior residents and two for the senior residents. A member of the team led with devotions on two of the days. With an inpatient service of up to 90 patients, teaching rounds were held on each Saturday. The team also worshipped each Sunday evening at the in-campus English/French services. Steffes spent four hours of dedicated time with Sanoussi going over the PAACS program, making suggestions for improvement and helping to write the annual program report.

The next such specialty orthopedic team from World Medical Mission is scheduled for Nkhoma Hospital in Malawi the last two weeks of September.

## PAACS GRADUATE IMPROVING SURGICAL CARE IN BURUNDI

*[Editor's note: Many PAACS residents come to training with the dream of returning to their home area, but few actually do – the realities of practicing surgery require more than is commonly available in many small hospitals. Andrew John was one of those who could fulfill his dream.]*

My name is Andrew John, a surgeon who graduated from the PAACS-Galmi program in January this year. I am now working at Karusi, a regional and referral hospital located in my home village in Burundi. This is a government hospital that started 8 years ago. It has around 250 beds of which 80 are in the surgical department. This hospital receives mainly poor patients – 80% of whom can't pay the hospital bills. For now, I am one of two surgeons working in this hospital.

I went back to serve in this hospital since I felt I had a clear call from God. I had worked there before joining PAACS. I decided to go back there since there is a huge need for surgeons and many patients coming in this hospital who can't afford surgical treatment in any other hospital. Despite the many challenges, I feel joy in my heart to share the suffering with my fellow brothers and sisters.

Since I arrived in this hospital, I have been taking care of hundreds of patients coming with different surgical needs. I have significantly improved surgical care in this hospital. Mortality and morbidity rates from both emergency and elective surgery have reduced; before I came, many procedures were done by locally-trained medical officers.

With the help from surgeons I met while training with PAACS, I have introduced SIGN intramedullary nails in this hospital and I am slowly developing the orthopedic department. I also found many patients suffering with chronic wounds since no one who was doing skin grafting. I have started grafting them and many have been discharged to home.

I also help to train medical officers (from different hospitals) to do some emergency procedures such as caesarean sections, hysterectomies, appendectomies, et cetera.

As I was trained by PAACS, I always pray with other staff members and patients before morning rounds and before any surgical procedure. This practice is touching and changing not only patients but also doctors, nurses, assistant and anesthetists working with me. I also take the time to share the gospel, to pray and to encourage patients, especially those suffering from incurable diseases such as advanced cancers.

A recent example was a religious Catholic sister who has advanced ovarian tumor. I took more than one week praying and sharing the word of God with her. She was touched, encouraged and said that she has never seen a surgeon or any other medical doctor like me before.

Four weeks ago, I explored a 30-year-old woman who had a spontaneous urine discharge for months secondary to caesarean section. I found that she had uretero-vaginal fistula that I couldn't fix due to lack of necessary materials. I personally took the patient to the capital city where I negotiated with one private clinic and we did ureteric reimplantation with a urologist at affordable bills. This patient and his family were very much touched by this display of compassion and love.

In few years, my prayer and dreams are that Burundi will have many PAACS surgeons who will help to improve surgical care and spread the love of Jesus.

I take this opportunity to thank leadership, faculty and different supporters of PAACS who have invested their time and money in order to help many African doctors like me to achieve their goals of becoming Christian surgeons who continue to take care of many patients suffering from surgical and spiritual needs in different hospital of Africa. May God bless you abundantly!



Dr. Andrew John with the ureteral fistula patient and her family.

## NEWS SHORTS

- **PAACS Remediation Exam:** On the weekend of July 23, 41 PAACS residents took the remediation exam. Twenty-seven residents were required to sit the exam by PAACS policies and 14 residents elected to take the exam for more experience. The KR20 of the exam was 0.85. With a minor curve, the majority of exam takers (85%) were successful on the exam. Please be in prayer for those residents who were unsuccessful. Wisdom is needed to counsel them and plan next steps.

- **Bongolo Anesthesia Training Graduation**

– In a June 29 Facebook post by Dr. Jeff Lane, it reads, “Congratulations to Peya, Mathieu, and Joseph! They completed the first formal Nurse Anesthesia Training program at Bongolo Hospital and celebrated their graduation on June 26th. These men completed over 500 hours of classroom and simulation work and over 5000 hours of hands-on clinical experience during the last two years. Goal achieved—to provide safe and competent anesthesia care for the people of Gabon.”

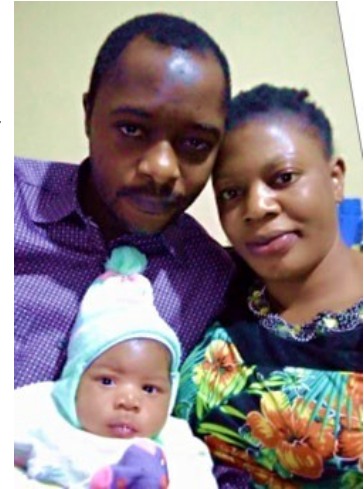


- **Personnel Changes at Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre:** Dr. Wendy Willmore is on an early home assignment while she appeals her work permit which was not renewed by the Tanzanian government. Please pray that God’s direction and hand will be clear for her. In the meantime, the administration of the hospital has been shaken up after a change in the leadership of the diocese. Dr. Paul Kisanga has been replaced with a new CEO of the hospital. There was concern about what this might mean for the PAACS program, but on July 15, Dr. Frank Madinda was appointed via letter as the new director of clinical services at Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre, replacing Dr. Kibira in that position. He has received promises that the new CEO will honor the MOU with PAACS and all the PAACS activities will continue as per the status quo. According to the new structure of administration, he will have the final say on all issues related to clinical training and other related clinical issues and control over the financial issues concerning PAACS.
- **Parker Inducted into Academy of Master Surgeon Educators:** Dr. Andrea Parker, PAACS faculty member and Assistant Program Director at Tenwek Hospital has received word that she has been made an Associate Member of the Academy of Master Surgeon Educators™. Developed under the auspices of the American College of Surgeons’ Division of Education, the academy recognizes surgeon educators who have devoted their careers to surgical education. Individuals are selected as members or associate members following stringent peer review. The academy’s mission is to play a leadership role in advancing the science and practice of education across all surgical specialties, promoting the highest achievements in the lifetimes of surgeons. Parker has played the lead role in developing the two-year curriculum for junior surgical residents for COSECSA. She has conceived, designed and implemented the roll-out of this ground-breaking program, recruited the authors, written or co-written much of it and edited it. This program is changing the usual paradigm of surgical education on the continent of Africa.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Birth Announcement:** Budzi Bennett Wirnyu was born on 16 Jun weighing 2.7 kg to Dr. Ngwang Prosper and his wife, Unity. They are currently at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon on rotation away from their program at Malamulo Adventist in Malawi. Bennett joins his older brother, Benny.



- **Birth Announcement:** Amaris AnatswanaShe Munjeri was the first- born baby girl to Admire Munjeri and his wife, Daphne. She was born July 10 at a weight of 4.0 kg. Both the mum and baby are doing fine.
- **School for Surgeons Website Revamped:** The next revision of the COSECSA [School for Surgeons](#) will be published on August 19. There has been a major attempt to link the syllabus and the necessary resources available for studying the various topics.
- **Long-term and Short-term Help needed:** Short-term and career surgeons (including surgical subspecialists) are needed at almost all of the PAACS programs, but the following needs are greatest:
  - **Orthopedic Surgeons Needed at Tenwek Hospital:** Please contact World Medical Mission or Dr. Keir Thelander ([keir.thelander@paacs.net](mailto:keir.thelander@paacs.net)) for further information.
  - **Anesthesia Help Needed at Malamulo Adventist Hospital:** Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi has lost anesthesia services and is down to one provider. If any anesthesia professionals (including CRNAs) can assist on a short- or long-terms basis, they would much appreciate the help. Please contact Dr. Kasumba Moses at [mkasumba78@gmail.com](mailto:mkasumba78@gmail.com).
  - **Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon** has (9) General Surgery residents. Currently, there is a conflict occurring in Cameroon but people have started returning to the area. Contact Dr. Jim Brown at [jimbrownjab@gmail.com](mailto:jimbrownjab@gmail.com).
  - **Short-term and Long-term Surgeons Needed at SIM-Galmi:** There is a critical need for general surgeons at SIM-Galmi. The career faculty members presently there consist only of Yakoubou Sanoussi (GS) and Nathan Peterson (ENT, Head and Neck who will soon transfer his place of service to Kijabe Hospital). Please contact World Medical Mission or Yakoubou Sanoussi at [Yakoubou.Sanoussi@sim.org](mailto:Yakoubou.Sanoussi@sim.org)
  - **Short-term and Long-term Surgeons Needed at Bongolo:** The Bongolo Hospital general surgery residency program (6 general surgery residents) needs a general surgeon who is able to serve under a sending agency for at least 2 years starting in 2021. Please contact [Dr. Zachary O'Connor at bongolopd@gmail.com](mailto:Dr.ZacharyO'Connor@bongolopd@gmail.com) if you are interested and able to serve in that time frame.
  - **Short-term and Long-term Surgeons Needed at Harpur:** The PAACS program at Harpur

Memorial Hospital in Menouf, Egypt needs a General Surgeon for long term (preferably) or short term (several months) service starting now. For further information please contact Dr. Paul Lim via email at [lifenlim@pm.me](mailto:lifenlim@pm.me)

- **Mark Your Calendar**

- **Examinations:**

- **COSECSA Written exams:** The written exams for both the MCS and FCS level will be administered on **Wednesday, September 1, 2021**. The oral MCS exams will be entirely virtual and held the weekend of **November 19-21, 2021**. The details regarding the FCS level exams and the conference are still unsettled.

- **PAACS Conferences**

- **Fall 2021 PAACS Board of Directors Meeting** will be held as an in-person meeting on October 15-16, 2021, in Chicago. We plan to hold the preliminary council and committee meetings on Zoom ahead of time. PAACS Fall Board of Directors Meeting which will take place October 15, 2021 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Des Plaines, IL. The registration deadline for the conference is Monday, September 27; the reservation deadline for the discounted rate at the hotel is October 1

- Registration for conference: <https://paacs.net/get-involved/fall-2021-board-meeting-registration-open.html>
- Reserve a Room Online: [https://hiltongardeninn.hilton.com/en/gi/groups/personalized/O/ORDCHGI-PAACS-20211014/index.jhtml?WT.mc\\_id=POG](https://hiltongardeninn.hilton.com/en/gi/groups/personalized/O/ORDCHGI-PAACS-20211014/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG)
- Reserve a Room by Phone: Call the front desk at 1-847-296-8900. When calling, please mention you are part of the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS) group to receive the discounted rate.

- **PAACS Basic Science Conference** is tentatively scheduled October 18 (Monday) – 29 (Friday), 2021 at the Brackenhurst International Conference Center in Limuru, Kenya. It is primarily designed for attendance by first- and second-year residents and some program faculty. Details will be forthcoming and requests for speakers will soon be e-mailed.

- **PAACS Faculty Development Conference** – the date in June 2022 has not been definitely set. It is hoped that it will be held at Brackenhurst International Conference Centre.

- **Other Conferences of interest:**

- **Prescription for Renewal:** The PFR conference sponsored by Samaritan's Purse/World Medical Mission scheduled for September 16 – 19 has been cancelled due to a resurgence in Covid-19.
- **Global Missions Health Conference** will be held in Louisville on November 11 – 13. Details can be obtained at [their website](#).
- **Faculty Development Conference** – Christian Health Service Corps will be hosting at their Texas campus another Faculty Development Conference March 10-12, 2022. Find out more by [Clicking Here](#).



- **Mobilizing Medical Missions – M3 Conference** will be held at Lakewood Church, Houston, TX, February 18-19, 2022. You may register by [Clicking Here](#).
- **CMDA-CMDE conferences:** The Continued Medical and Dental Education Commission of the Christian Medical and Dental Associations is planning to have a virtual continuing medical education session on October 23, 2021 and an in-person conference to be held in Marathon Greece April 4 – 14, 2022. The 2020 and 2021 in-person conferences were cancelled because of the pandemic. Only candidates for CME, their spouses and children over 16 years of age will be invited to attend the Greece conference in 2022, but they must be able to prove a full vaccination against Covid. Further information will be forthcoming.

## PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Pray that God will lay the need for short-term surgeons to assist the programs on the hearts of those who are willing to respond. Pray for the resolution of the ongoing Covid19 pandemic in Africa which continues to interfere with some travel plans.
- Pray for the residents taking the written exams (both Membership and Fellowship level) on the first Wednesday of September.
- Please pray for the ongoing selection process (interviews, application reviews and final decisions) for new residents to start in January of 2022.
- Peace and stability in the PAACS countries. Pray especially for the ongoing tribal unrest and famine in Ethiopia and the recurrent civil unrest in Cameroon.
- Pray for the continued rollout of the Saline Process throughout all the PAACS training sites.
- Pray that PAACS will glorify God and be used to impact Africa for His Kingdom. Plead that many lives will be saved through surgery and many people will come to know the love of Jesus.
- Pray that God will bring His chosen long and short-term missionary and national surgeons to help train African residents in the PAACS training programs.
- Pray for wisdom regarding the planning and preparation for the possible Brackenhurst PAACS Basic Science Course the last 2 weeks of October. Additionally, for a possible Brackenhurst PAACS Basic Science Course next year (2022) transitioning to an all 1<sup>st</sup> year resident conference.
- Pray for PAACS graduates that are serving God's people. Pray for God's grace, protection, provision, strength, and blessings to cover the PAACS graduates.
- Pray for approval from the government of Kenya for the anesthesia, plastics, ob/gyn, and surgical endoscopy programs.
- Pray for wisdom and removal of barriers to begin general surgery training in Burundi, Malawi, Madagascar and Togo. Pray for God's guidance for the possibility of training in Liberia at ELWA.
- Pray that God will make it possible soon for the short-term missionaries to return to service in the mission hospitals.
- Pray for all the PAACS faculty members and the hospitals – for personal health and safety and for financial viability of the charity hospitals in this tough time.
- Pray for the PAACS Board as we continue to develop an updated strategic plan.
- Pray for Galmi Hospital which has an immense need for General Surgery help now and for the next 3-

6 months. Pray also for the needs at Bongolo Hospital (June, July, and August), Harpur (now through 2022) and Kijabe Hospital. Please pray for the anesthesia needs at Malamulo Adventist Hospital.

- Pray for the Tenwek Orthopedic training program which has a great need for additional faculty members to sustain this vital program.
- Pray for those faculty members on home assignment – the Loves, the O’Connors, the Andersons, the Snells, Wendy Willmore, and Katherine Shafer - for their rest, for the times of medical work and for the meeting with their supporters and raising funds. Pray for Dr. Shafer as she is learning French until early next year. Pray for the faculty members that must cover their absence.
- Pray for those surgeons who are planning to join PAACS in the next few years – as they complete their residencies or fellowships, as they find a sending agency, as they raise the necessary money and as they prepare for the major cultural shifts.
- Pray for God’s hand upon the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre – that the shake-up of leadership will not significantly impact the care of patients and the training of residents. Pray for Frank Madinda in his new position. Pray that the Tanzanian government will renew a work permit for Dr. Wendy Willmore if it be God’s will.

Editor: Bruce C. Steffes, MD