



The PAACS Bulletin

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PAACS Spring 2024 Conference

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PAACS

PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY
OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS

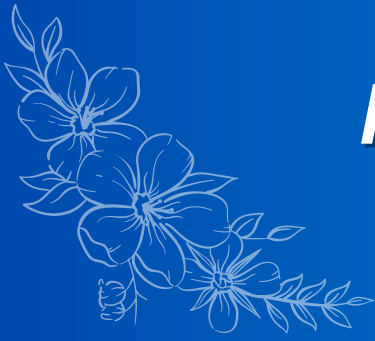
PAACS MISSION

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.

PAACS VISION

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

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO



*Susan Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer*

Dear PAACS Family,

This April was a month of celebration and collaboration for PAACS. We were thrilled to host our Spring Conference right here in Chicago, IL. It was a joy to see such an enthusiastic turnout, with 85 attendees joining us in person and another 30 connecting virtually.

This year's conference was packed with insightful updates from the PAACS administration, both past and present faculty members, some PAACS partners, and even a few PAACS graduates. We also heard from all PAACS councils and committees, ensuring our community stays informed and connected.

On Saturday morning, the Board of Directors convened in a closed session, and all remaining guests engaged in a vital discussion on "Topics on the Mission Field." These discussions not only deepened our understanding but also reinforced our commitment to God's work through our ministry. It was a weekend filled with profound fellowship, prayer, and visible blessings from God.

This month, in partnership with Loma Linda University, accreditation visits took place in Western Africa, including Mbingo, Bongolo, and Galmi. Despite the challenges posed by regional conflicts, our teams were dedicated to completing these necessary visits. We covet your prayers for these regions, that peace and healing may prevail through God's intervention.

Closer to home, PAACS was delighted to share our mission and vision with the congregation at Ridgeway Alliance Church in New York. Beyond presenting during the morning church services, we organized a luncheon and dinner meeting to delve deeper into the impactful work of PAACS. Looking ahead to May, we are excited to participate in the CMDA meeting in Asheville, NC. We invite you to visit our booth and say hi to Keir and Joanna Thelander!

Blessings,

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

PAACS SPRING CONFERENCE 2024

Susan A. Koshy, JD, MPH

Thank you to all who participated in our Spring 2024 PAACS Conference held on April 12-13, both in-person in Chicago and online. With 85 attendees joining us physically and 30 tuning in virtually, the event truly showcased our global reach. This is always a significant gathering which offers a blend of fellowship, learning, and strategic discussions. It was exciting to welcome so many PAACS graduates and faculty members (past and present) to the in-person meeting.



The open session began at 9:30 AM on Friday with administrative reports that set the tone for the day. Speakers included: **Susan A Kosher, CEO; Dr. Keir Thelander, Executive Vice President; Dr. Drew Huang, Associate Director of Education; Dr. John Tarpley, Academic Dean; Rev. Ed Scarce, Spiritual Dean; and Renee Fink, Chief Financial Officer.** These presentations provided updates on the operational successes and challenges, setting the groundwork for further discussions.



Following the administrative insights, the conference highlighted various PAACS programs with specific updates from Dr. Tim Nunn on Orthopaedic and Pediatric Orthopaedic programs in Ethiopia. Then, Dr. K. Shafer spoke about the general surgery program at SIM Galmi in Niger. PAACS Graduate, Dr. Yamakani Limbe spoke about the program at Nkhoma in Malawi, and rounding out the program sessions was Dr. Randall Owen sharing about Harpur in Egypt. Each one provided insights and updates painting a beautiful picture that could have only been created through God's hand.

Dr. Michael Mwachiro, a PAACS graduate, provided an engaging update from COSECSA. Dr. King-David Terna Yawa shared about the commitment to develop higher spiritual assets, while Dr. Mark Reeves provided a report from Loma Linda University. The session continued with meaningful contributions from PAACS partners. Presentations from Rick Allen with MedSend and Brian Decker with

CONTINUED: PAACS CONFERENCE

MADALA, emphasized a collaborative spirit. Presentations from Medical Education International (MEI) and the collaboration between PAACS and the Christian Academy of African Physicians (CAAP) were also highlighted, followed by an update from Dr. Debbie Eisenhut on the African Surgeons to Under-Served Communities Initiative. These showed an expanding network and the potential for future initiatives.

PAACS Council presentations, covered a range of specialties including General Surgery, Orthopaedic, Pediatric, Anesthesiology, Ob/Gyn, Neurosurgery, Cardiothoracic and Head and Neck. These talks not only reflected the academic and professional depth of PAACS but also its commitment to comprehensive surgical and related specialty education.

The conference concluded with heartfelt presentations from former faculty members, Dr. Jim Brown (Mbingo), Dr. Joe Starke (Galmi), and Dr. Moses Kasumba (Malamulo). They shared their experiences and the lasting impact of PAACS on their professional lives. The final reports from PAACS Committees: Spiritual Development, Advancement, Alumni Liaison, Curriculum, Professional Development, and Program, emphasized the ongoing efforts to enhance PAACS' reach and effectiveness.

Our commitment to prayer is always woven throughout our meetings. It was moving to join in prayer with so many of you, covering every facet of PAACS' mission. This unity fortifies our work and continues to lead us forward as we seek to continue following God's will for the future of this ministry.



On Saturday, April 13th the PAACS Board of Directors met in a Closed Session to discuss critical issues impacting the PAACS ministry. They discussed the growth of PAACS, its finances, the strategic plan, board workgroups, and new programs. These discussions are crucial as they direct our path towards a growing impact across Africa.

All remaining guests were invited to a session titled, "Topics on the Mission Field" which included a variety of panel discussions. Dr. Jim Smith led this session beginning the day with a panel discussion "What Does Serving as a PAACS Faculty Look Like for Couples?", followed by another panel, "How Can Visiting Faculty Be the Most Helpful with Resident Training?" along with Do's and Don'ts. After a short break, they returned to discuss "Ethical Dilemmas Faced in African Mission Hospitals" which led into "Professional and Ethical Dilemmas Faced in Global Healthcare: How Can We Make a Responsible Decision?" The session ended with "Evaluating an Ethical Dilemma in a Patient with Breast Cancer Using Role Playing."

Looking forward, we are eager to build on the momentum from this spring at our next PAACS Conference, scheduled for October 10-12, 2024, in Chicago. Mark your calendars and prepare to join us for what promises to be another enriching event. Your continued support and participation are vital as we advance our mission to train and disciple more African surgeons and related specialists.

PAACS PARTNERSHIP: TOGETHER IN SERVICE

At PAACS, our mission succeeds through the faithful support of many partners whose contributions are pivotal in every step we make. We would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge some of the partnerships that have been made throughout the last 28 years.

This month, at our Spring Conference, we had the privilege of honoring two of our loyal supporters: Rick Allen, CEO of MedSend and Brian Decker, Executive Director for MADALA. Both have been instrumental with their support of PAACS residents over the last few years. Together we are all looking to improve the healthcare of Africa, both physically and spiritually. While we are grateful that we could thank these two organizations in person, there are so many more that help to support our ministry in a variety of ways

Numerous organizations collaborate with us, enhancing our educational programs and vital surgical and specialty training. Organizations like COSECSA and WACS align perfectly with our educational goals, ensuring excellence across our training initiatives. Loma Linda University, in particular, has been instrumental in validating our programs through consistent site visits. We are also thankful for each of the mission hospitals where a PAACS program is hosted and those who accept PAACS residents on rotation.



Organizations like World Medical Mission and Samaritan's Purse are instrumental in supporting our short and long-term faculty. These partnerships enable us to train and disciple PAACS surgeons and related specialists effectively. Additionally, CMDA has stood by us since our inception, supporting us when PAACS was merely a commission under their broader umbrella.

PAACS is grateful for our partnership with Logos bible software where we have been able to incorporate our full spiritual curriculum into their extensive digital library. Also, our work with IHS global and the Saline process has provided yet additional resources to help our residents and faculty excel in sharing the gospel in a medical setting.



Yet, there are still many others such as Hope for Our Sisters, SOMA Foundation, African Mission Healthcare Foundation, MBF, MEI, FAIR, CAAP, SIM, CURE, and BethanyKids. Whether supporting our residents directly or assisting the hospitals where our programs are based, these partners are crucial to our success.

We recognize that there may be others not named here, but who are every bit as important to our mission. Know that every effort and contribution is recognized and cherished, and we are grateful for your continued support and commitment.

It is incredibly rewarding to see how many organizations work alongside us under God's guidance to advance His kingdom. Each partnership plays a unique role, and witnessing this collaboration unfold is truly beautiful.



TOPICS ON THE MISSION FIELD

Jim Brown, MD

Former PAACS Program Director, Mbingo

Dr. James Smith and Dr. Shari Falkenheimer served as hosts and moderators for a series of topics from the mission field on Saturday morning at the PAACS Spring Conference. These presentations and panels aimed to enable participants to hear firsthand accounts of challenges and lessons learned from PAACS missionaries who had served on the field.

The first-panel discussion asked two prior PAACS program directors and their wives, Joe and Mame Starke of SIM Galmi Hospital and Jim and Carolyn Brown of Mbingo Baptist Hospital, to discuss serving as a couple. Both couples agreed that a clear sense of God's call to each marriage partner is essential before serving. When things get difficult, as they always do in mission settings, knowing that God has called you together provides the foundation for perseverance.

The next panel addressed how visiting faculty can be the most helpful with resident training. The panel of four prior PAACS faculty- Joe Starke, Jim Brown, Moses Kasumba, and Deborah Eisenhut- discussed the importance of the visitors' motivation for coming, being flexible, respecting African leadership, and withholding judgment until the visitor has a better understanding of how things work.

***“GOD CARES ABOUT THE POOR,
AND OUR RESPONSE TO THE POOR
IS A MEASURE OF OUR FAITH
AND OBEDIENCE.”***

The final panel discussion addressed ethical issues in mission hospitals, with an emphasis on some of the unique ethical issues that occur cross-culturally. Dr. Kasumba from Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi presented several ethical issues related to the allocation of resources, sound judgment as to what kinds of cases the hospital can support, and visitor interactions with national staff. Dr. Brown gave a presentation on caring for the poor in PAACS hospitals.

The PAACS Mission Statement emphasizes excellent and compassionate care to those most in need, but this is very challenging when patients with life-threatening surgical emergencies present without financial resources. God cares about the poor, and our response to the poor is a measure of our faith and obedience. Dr. Brown discussed creative ways for PAACS hospitals to balance the need to care for the poor without impoverishing the hospital. Dr. Smith spoke on the professional and ethical principles in global healthcare with an emphasis on cultural differences. Dr. Starke presented a case of a patient with locally-advanced breast cancer and the panel role played a discussion that highlighted some of the ethical dilemmas missionary surgeons must navigate in resource-limited areas.

KIJABE PROGRAM: A PAACS RESURRECTION STORY

Matt Kynes, MD

Program Director, AIC Kijabe-Anesthesiology



As the day's cases came to a close, I got a message from our general surgeon Dr. Rich Davis. "Ruptured AAA, ETA 2 hours." For an anesthesia and surgical team in any setting these cases are among the most challenging we face. With the long delay to transfer and limitations for massive transfusion, vascular grafts, critical medications, and ICU care common in resource-limited settings, the chances of a good outcome are often poor. Nevertheless, we quickly mobilized our team and prepared to offer all we could for this patient.

We called two O+ donors to give fresh blood for transfusion. The anesthesia team, including our second-year resident Dr. Archie, prepared for advanced lines for blood pressure monitoring and IV access, echocardiography, and vasopressor infusions. The surgical team, including third-year resident Dr. Leahcaren, obtained appropriate aortic grafts and ensured that the patient could clear financing quickly and come to the theatre from casualty as soon as possible. Everything was prepared, and then our patient arrived.

After a prayer with our theatre team, she was induced, and the case began. The entire room was buzzing with activity from start to finish, with the anesthesia team titrating drugs and giving blood, the surgical team identifying and repairing the source of bleeding, and the scrub and nursing teams providing everything that was needed. The patient made it successfully through the operation, and after a precautionary second look two days later, she was extubated in the ICU and awoke to see her family, grateful to God to be alive. She recovered smoothly and left the hospital several days later. It was clear to everyone that God had guided this successful outcome, and after learning the rest of her story, it became clear that God had also rescued her from the brink of death.

A day before she was brought to Kijabe, the patient had presented to a rural hospital with abdominal pain. She was soon diagnosed with an aortic rupture and was slowly bleeding to death. Without adequate facilities and expertise to manage such a condition, the local surgeon told her and her family that it was only a matter of time before she would die. A recent Kijabe PAACS graduate, Dr. Gady, had taken a placement at this hospital and was finishing his daily rounds when he passed by the patient's room and heard crying. He asked what was happening and found out the tragic news. However, in his training at Kijabe he had seen these patients treated successfully. "At Kijabe, they can help you." He quickly arranged to transfuse the patient and transfer by ambulance. Suddenly, there was hope, and a patient's life was saved.

Soon after this case, we celebrated Easter in Kijabe. The resurrection shows that God can turn despair into hope, sorrow into rejoicing, and death into life. And for patients across Africa, He is using PAACS trainees, faculty, and graduates to do it.



ACADEMIC DEAN UPDATE

John Tarpley, MD
Academic Dean

Attending meetings and travel not only provide the latest information but also afford the opportunity to “water relationships,” network, and make new friends. March was busy given the WACS annual meeting and Holy Week and Easter.

Meetings and a trip to two of our partner institutions defined April with the Spring PAACS Conference and Board meeting, three surgical meetings, and site visits to Bongolo Hospital in Gabon and then Mbingo in the Northwest Province of Cameroon.

Gabon, formerly French Equatorial Africa, is perhaps known best as the site of Albert Schweitzer’s hospital at Lambaréné on the Ogowe River which he established in 1913. (Hôpital Albert Schweitzer - Wikipedia).

For those of us in PAACS, Gabon is known as the birthplace of PAACS by David Thompson and the home institution for a decade of our Executive Vice President, Keir Thelander. Mark Reeves and Ryan Hayton of Loma Linda University, the USA credentialing body for the education and training of our PAACS residents and fellows, led the site visits which continued on to the SIM Galmi Hospital in Niger without me as I had a surgery education meeting in the States.

In 1996 PAACS started with one trainee. Currently there are 172 trainees and 156 graduates, nigh all in Africa. God has truly blessed PAACS. While Gabon had a peaceful coup d’etat (2023 Gabonese coup d’etat - Wikipedia) this past year and is stable, such is not the case for Cameroon in the Northwest Province where they have been in crisis mode since 2016 (Ambazonia - Wikipedia), which has not been in the USA news. Niger which underwent a coup (2023 Nigerien coup d’etat - Wikipedia) is currently in the news because the USA has been instructed to remove its military presence from Niger. Russian advisors have been invited as replacements. French military advisors were removed from Niger in December 2023. France completes military withdrawal from Niger, leaving a gap in the terror fight in the Sahel | AP News. Our dedicated PAACS faculty provide excellent training under difficult circumstances in harsh climates and conditions that are difficult for those of us stateside or in High Income Countries with air conditioning and stable utilities to imagine. Some quotes of note for your reflection:



“Surgical care for the poor is a neglected necessity all over the developing world and merits interchange and cooperation of all surgeons in all countries.”
T E Udewadia, *Indian J Surg* 65:504-509, 2003

“For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong.”
H. L. Mencken (1880—1956)

“Perhaps the most important thing we can do with our careers is to improve surgical delivery in low-income countries...and the most efficient way to do so is through technical and intellectual expertise transfer.”
Fiemu Nwariaku, February 14, 2008, Presidential Address, Association for Academic Surgery

Live in the Light of Your Own Mortality. "I am what you will be. I was what you are. For every man is this so."
Figure of Death (Memento Mori) | 61.97 | The Walters Art Museum



NYC FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS

Deborah Pedziwol

Senior Director of Partnership Development

Susan Koshy, PAACS CEO, and Deborah Pedziwol, Senior Director Partnership Development (PAACS), traveled to New York City, the weekend of April 6 - April 7, 2024, for multiple fundraising events. Our incredible host for the weekend was Dr. Randall Owen, who serves as the Representative of the Consortium of Fellowship Councils on the PAACS Board of Directors. Over the course of the weekend, we reached an enthusiastic audience of nearly 500, sharing inspiring stories of how PAACS is making a tangible difference in Africa.

A heartfelt thank you to Dr. Owen, whose dedication and network were pivotal in orchestrating this weekend's success. On Saturday night, 41 guests gathered for dinner in Manhattan. We also extend our thanks to Dr. Owens's church, Ridgeway Alliance, for their warm hospitality and enthusiastic support. They graciously hosted PAACS during both Sunday morning services, providing a platform to share our transformative work. Following the services, a luncheon offered a wonderful opportunity for deeper discussion about our mission. Praise God for their commitment and energy!

We are so grateful for the opportunity to strengthen existing relationships and cultivate new ones at these New York events! We are thankful for Dr. Owen, who consistently partners with this ministry to expand our network and support fundraising opportunities!



JOIN US IN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN 2024-25!

Host a dinner, introduce us to your church leaders, or share our mission within your network. Let's expand PAACS' impact together! Are you ready to host an event? Contact Deb Pedziwol at deborah.pedziwol@paacs.net, Amanda Woods at amanda.woods@paacs.net, or Ken Rutledge at ken.rutledge@paacs.net and let's plan an event that creates a lasting difference!



DR. MATEKEYA HICKS GREEN

**ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY RESIDENT
TENWEK HOSPITAL
KENYA**

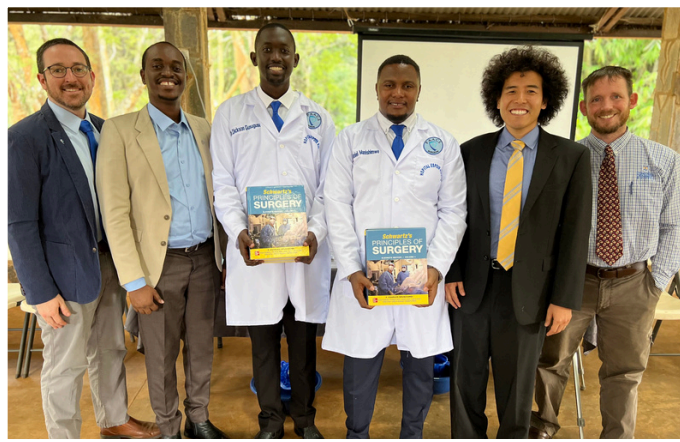
As a fifth-year Orthopaedic resident at Tenwek Hospital in Kenya, Dr. Matekeya Hicks Green was first exposed to the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS) during his medical school electives at Tenwek. This marked a pivotal moment in his career. Here, he encountered a unique approach to healthcare, where residents and attending physicians from PAACS combined surgical proficiency with compassionate, prayerful attention to their patients. Bringing faith and surgical expertise together struck a chord with him. He recognized that PAACS offered a nurturing environment where he could excel in surgical training. The emphasis on integrating spiritual care into the curriculum, team devotions, and a supportive community aligned perfectly with his aspirations.

One of Dr. Matekeya's first memories of PAACS occurred during an orthopaedic clinic as a medical student. He received a patient with a leg deformity who had traveled extensively across the country seeking intervention but to no avail. He listened compassionately to her story and shared her situation with a PAACS surgeon. Before proceeding with the evaluation, the PAACS surgeon shared the gospel and spoke of grace, love, and the sovereignty of God. The patient admitted to having never experienced this before in any previous consultations. In the midst of her difficulties, both Dr. Matekeya and the PAACS surgeon prayed for her, and she accepted Jesus as her Savior. While initially they had no answers for her pain, God provided the solution in a divine way and the patient went on to have a successful surgery. The PAACS surgeon took a step of faith, and the patient trusted that God would use him to heal her.

This encounter changed more than just the patient's life; it deeply impacted Dr. Matekeya. He knew that this was the type of surgeon he wanted to become. Witnessing her long and fruitless journey for care prompted him to reflect on his own approach to medicine. He recognized the significance of humility with an eternal perspective to fulfill the Great Commission. Dr. Matekeya aspires to excel in his surgical skills to allow him to reach the greatest number of people in need. Yet, he wants to remain humble and grounded, recognizing the importance of reaching patients in their time of need, listening to their stories, and sharing the love of Christ. He remains inspired by the mission of PAACS and envisions a future of medical missions, leveraging his skills and faith to heal bodies and win souls for Jesus in underserved communities.

KIBUYE WHITE COAT CEREMONY

On March 16th, we held a white coat ceremony for our two new residents, Danny and Dickson, and presented them each with a white coat featuring the new PAACS logo. We prayed for blessings over them and celebrated together with their families.



NEW BABY AT MBINGO



Dr. Ngoran and wife Ivoline welcomed a baby girl, Sonyuy Ngoran, born 14/03/2023, weighed 3450g.

PRAYER & PRAISE

- Pray for God's favor over all PAACS training programs, that they will glorify God and be used to impact Africa for His Kingdom.
- Pray for PAACS graduates that are serving God's people. Pray for God's protection, provision, and blessings to cover the PAACS graduates.
- Pray for blessings on all PAACS partnering organizations, supporters, and prayer warriors.

Each month, we pray for residents by name. Please join us this month by covering these residents in prayer:

- Yannick Mpanzu
- Ntuntu Sweni Tamfu
- Junior Arung
- Patiente Ishimwe Umuganwa
- Radoniaina Dinamalala Olivier
- Tefinirina Aina Mirana Razafimanantsoa
- Valimbavaka Santatriniaina
- Toavina Rabenasolo
- Raoul Mbango
- Alain Nishimwe
- Levis Ndayishimiye
- Dickson Gusugusu
- Daniel Manishimwe

PARTNER WITH PAACS

GIVE (U.S.)

GIVE (CANADA)

GIVE (OUTSIDE
U.S. & CANADA)

ARTICLES ON SURGERY

Compiled by Margaret Tarpley

- [Modeling the Lifetime Impact of Reconstructive Plastic Surgery Training: Implications for Building Capacity in Global Surgery](#)
- [Global surgery health impact pyramid](#)
- [Should Current Laws Be Revised to Address Occupational Hazards Caused by Hand-Tool Size Mismatch Among Surgeons](#)
- [Optimal Practices for Suspected Nodal Melanoma—The Role of the General Surgeon](#)
- [CAANS Newsletter in the Era of Health Digitalization. Neurological Surgery in Africa](#)
- [Urological Outcomes Following Pelvic Exenteration for Non-Urological Malignancies](#)
- [Management and Outcomes of Wilms Tumor With Suprarenal Intravascular Extension: A Pediatric Surgical Oncology Research Collaborative Study](#)

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