



THE PAACS BULLETIN

Monthly Newsletter
Issue #232
November 2023



AIC Kijabe Hospital Team's Second Annual PAACS Women's Retreat



Research Day Celebration at Tenwek Hospital



PAACS Academic Dean Dr. John Tarpley, CEO Susan Koshy, and EVP Dr. Keir Thelander at the Global Missions Health Conference

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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



Dear PAACS Family,

As November draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on all God has done, particularly during this season of Thanksgiving. We have gathered with loved ones, shared delicious meals, and taken moments to count our blessings. In this month's Bulletin, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you who makes up our PAACS community.

*Susan Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer*

Gratitude is a powerful force that can transform our perspectives and strengthen our connections. We are thankful for every PAACS resident, graduate, and faculty member who forms the heart of PAACS. They are tirelessly delivering quality surgical care and the hope that can only be found in Christ to many underserved communities throughout Africa. I am thankful for the dedication and vision of the PAACS Leadership and Administration team who guide this ministry on the path that God has set, doing so both efficiently and effectively.

As you read through the pages of this Bulletin, let us remember that every achievement and every milestone is made possible through the efforts of many. Not only by the dedication and hard work of our remarkable PAACS family, both in Africa and North America, but also by the faithfulness and goodness of God. Even in times of challenges and adversity, we are thankful that God's presence and guidance is always with us and has seen us through.

Thank you for being an integral part of the PAACS family. Thank you for your prayers, support, volunteerism, leadership, and all that you have done for this ministry. I am genuinely grateful for each of you.

In this season, may you be filled with abundant gratitude, God's enduring joy, and His lasting peace.

Blessings,

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



FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

This report details the work of our organization over the past year and the projected growth of this ministry. The PAACS Annual Report also provides information about our residents, faculty, and training programs, as well as the PAACS finances, leadership, and administration. [Click here](#) to read the report.



PAACS AT THE GLOBAL MISSIONS HEALTH CONFERENCE IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

John Tarpley, MD
Academic Dean

Today's paragraph focuses on the recent 28th Global Missions Health Conference hosted by Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, KY, a gathering I encourage anyone interested in missions and healthcare to attend.

Dr. David Dageforde, after a mission trip to Ethiopia in the mid-1990s, returned with a vision for medical missions and became a member of his church's Missions Committee at the invitation of Dr. Russ Summay. Dr. Dageforde had experience providing cardiology meetings modeled on experiences from his Georgetown fellowship. The first gathering was in 1996. In his welcome to the attendees at the 25th Conference in 2021, Dr. Dageforde opened with:

"Twenty-five years ago a small medical mission conference was initiated with the goal to inform members of Southeast Christian Church who were involved in some aspect of healthcare about medical missions. Surprisingly, of the 220 in attendance, 180 lived outside of Indiana and Kentucky; and many of those individuals actually wrote letters about the need for such a conference nationally. Ten years later, over 2,500 attendees were present at the 10th Annual Conference with over 100 speakers and a multitude of exhibitors. To God goes the Glory!"

PAACS-related individuals annually attend and contribute to this major missions gathering. In addition to hosting a booth to introduce attendees to and about PAACS, various folks presented at break-out sessions:

- Keir Thelander, Executive Vice-President of PAACS, led a robust "PAACS Update Dinner" Friday night with multiple speakers and a vibrant Q&A session.
- David Thompson delivered an inspirational Plenary Session on "The Baffling Call of God."
- Jim Smith led two break-out sessions: "Making Short-Term Global Healthcare Mission Trips Ethical, Equitable and Ecologically Responsible" and "Using Healthcare Education to Reach Muslims, Buddhist, and Hindu Cultures." Rebekah Naylor participated in the prior session and also presented "Women on Mission."
- Several presentations were given by Burton Lee, Head of Medical Education and the Head of Global Critical Care in the Critical Care Medicine Department at the National Institutes of Health, who spent six years at AIC Kijabe Hospital in Kenya, set up an ICU, and trained Clinical Officers: "Separating Progress From Hype in Medicine: Fragility, Flaws, & Fallacy in Scientific Evidence," with Sandy Lee, "Achieving Financial Freedom Whether Or Not You Go Overseas—Mission, Medicine, Marriage, & Money," and "Supporting Global Critical Care in Resource Limited Countries Through Medical Education."
- Sandy Lee spoke on "Raising MKs and TCKs: The Blessings and the Obstacles." TCKs = Third Culture Kids.
- Mike Chupp, previously at Tenwek Hospital in SW Kenya and now leading CMDA, presented on "Thriving in the Crucible of Cross-Cultural Community."

A major takeaway for me was the substantial number of young attendees including many medical students, pre-medical students, residents, fellows, and young physicians. This was complemented by many winding up their overseas or stateside positions and looking for how to contribute post "retirement."

Next year's GMHC: November 7-9, 2024. Plan Ahead. To God goes the Glory!

PHOTOS FROM THE GLOBAL MISSIONS HEALTH CONFERENCE IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY





SOMETIMES WE NEED TO REMEMBER

*Tim Love, MD
General Surgery Program Director
Soddo Christian Hospital*

On rounds this morning, one of our second-year residents, Dr. Edomiyas, read from Psalm 77:11-13: "I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God?"

Amidst the many challenges facing our hospital and PAACS program here, God has recently given me the gracious gift of remembering his many gracious deeds over the history of our hospital. Recently listening to Susan Koshy give an update on PAACS, I was reminded that our general surgery training program here in Soddo is the second oldest continuously running program in PAACS! Then last week during a taxi ride with a PAACS board member, he recounted the outlandish experience of one of his current surgical partners who volunteered at Soddo Christian Hospital (SCH) around 2006, just a year after the hospital had opened. Over a cup of coffee in our hospital café yesterday, Dr. Andrew Chew (past program director, 2015-2019) told me about his first visit to Soddo in the year 2000 to work with Dr. Harold Adolf (founder of SCH). I actually visited Soddo myself for the first time in 2003 to celebrate the translation of the Bible into the local language, also before the hospital had been built.



SCH founder Harold Adolf viewing the construction of the hospital in 2005



Significant growth seen in the number of current PAACS residents and faculty

These interactions helped me to pause and remember that despite licensing challenges, immigration hurdles for expats, and the ongoing workload all of us carry day to day, God has been and will continue to be at work here. He is the one who started this program and sustains it to this day, so we give Him thanks and wonder with the psalmist, "What god is great like our God?"

Soddo Christian Hospital and the PAACS training programs (general and orthopaedic surgery) are growing and developing in so many ways. We are building a women and children's hospital, and our programs are accepting more residents than ever. The hospital is busy. We have hired many wonderful national faculty and the hospital looks more Ethiopian than it used to. We have numerous alumni of the program pursuing subspecialty training or serving in positions of leadership in their respective hospitals. Our training program has a fruitful collaboration with two other hospitals in Ethiopia where residents work with PAACS graduates who have gone on to have a beautiful impact and service. We have also been gathering as residents, faculty, and alumni for an annual spiritual retreat, and this has been a special time of uniting as a PAACS family from across the country.



RESEARCH DAY AT TENWEK HOSPITAL

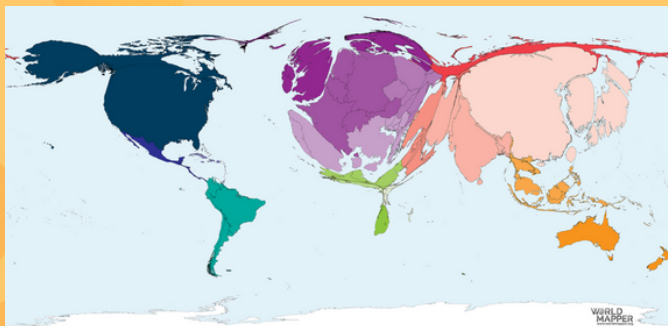


*Andrea Parker, MD
Head of Medical Education and Research
Tenwek Hospital*

On November 16th, the Tenwek Hospital Medical Education and Research Department held our first Research Day. Inspired by our colleagues at Kijabe Hospital who have held similar events for the past three years, we held this event with the goal of celebrating the research being done in and through our institution for the good of trainees, patients, the hospital and community, and to the glory of God. With the theme “Mission-Driven, Research-Informed, Compassion-Delivered,” the day was full of fun, laughter, prizes, with plenty of learning, networking, and encouragement.



Credit: Dr. Kimutai Sylvester
Dr. Bob Parker introduces why we do research



Map distorted to reflect research publications worldwide in 2016



Tenwek Hospital
Dr. Russ White addresses the group

Research is an essential part of PAACS training at Tenwek, and our PAACS trainees and faculty were featured prominently in the day, both as presenters and attendees. We began the day with a presentation from our Head of Research and PAACS general surgeon, Dr. Bob Parker. He discussed the state of research at Tenwek and around the continent, encouraging us to think about the who, what, why, and when of research. It is compelling to see the relative paucity of research that comes from the African continent. Trainees and faculty were inspired that we can all contribute to the body of literature for and within Africa. We also heard from Director of Medical Services and PAACS cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. Russ White, who encouraged us that much of what we do as physicians and surgeons is reconciling and repairing what is broken. As Christ calls us to reconcile ourselves and others to Him, research is one way that God allows us to be part of restoring and repairing what is broken in our world. PAACS trainees Drs. Ndaro Daniel, Linda Thure, and Daniel Baraka gave brief presentations on their research projects.

continued on next page



CURRENT PROGRAMS



We were blessed to have four phenomenal judges: Dr. Beth Tippet Barr, a researcher with extensive experience working for the CDC and other organizations throughout Africa who gave our keynote address; Dr. Peggoty Mutai, a pharmacist, senior lecturer at the University of Nairobi, and member of the Tenwek Hospital Board of Governors who chairs the Education, Training, and Research Subcommittee; Dr. John Fitzwater, a pediatric surgeon who has helped train many PAACS residents and fellows; and Dr. Philip Blasto, a graduate of the Tenwek PAACS general surgery residency program and the program director for the general surgery residency at Litein Hospital. Our judges were approachable, encouraging, and asked fantastic, probing questions to each poster presenter. They also made the very difficult selection of the winners from among 29 excellent posters.

With strong PAACS representation, 14 of our 29 posters were projects by PAACS residents or faculty. Our judge-selected winner was Dr. Fred Omondi, PAACS Ob/Gyn PGY2 for his poster entitled, "When the leading twin presents cephalic, does the mode of delivery affect neonatal outcomes? How do the costs of delivery compare?" Fred's project is causing us to reexamine the optimal delivery method for twins at Tenwek. Our runner up was Dr. Linda Thure, PAACS General Surgery PGY2 for her poster entitled, "Impact of timing on surgical site infections." Linda found, unexpectedly, that surgical site infection rate is higher for operations performed during the day than during nights and weekends. Both Fred's and Linda's projects have generated further opportunities for research.

We finished the day with lunch, the awarding of prizes by our Tenwek Hospital CEO, Mr. Shem Tangus, and cake. We are already looking forward to next year!



Judges Drs. John Fitzwater, Bett Tippet Barr, Peggoty Mutai, and Philip Blasto, together with Drs. Bob and Andrea Parker



Dr. Fred Omondi receiving award for best overall poster, pictured here with Drs. Andrea Parker, Russ White, and Bob Parker



Dr. Kipkurui Ngeno, winner of the people's choice award; Dr. Peggoty Mutai; Mr. Shem Tangus, Tenwek Hospital CEO; Drs. Fred Omondi and Linda Thure, judge-selected award winners; and Mrs. Faith Mogambi, Research Manager

SECOND ANNUAL KIJABE WOMEN'S RETREAT



Britney Grayson, MD
 Faculty
 PAACS Pediatric Surgery Program at BethanyKids Children's Centre

In October, the AIC Kijabe Hospital team held our second annual PAACS Women's Retreat. We went to nearby Lake Naivasha over a holiday weekend for three days of rest, community building, and encouragement. Twelve residents and three consultants were in attendance. The theme for our time was "Dwell in who God made you to be," with our key scripture being 1 Peter 4:10:

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

The highlights of our time were the four sessions carefully planned and led by our resident-leaders. These sessions were targeted towards some of the topics we identified as issues

for our group last year - societal pressures, balancing "it all," and impostor syndrome among them. In each topic, we sought God's truth. God has made and gifted each one of us differently and those differences in how we serve amount to God's grace, given out through us in its VARIOUS forms. It was awesome to hear the women speak of ways they are different and be encouraged that those same differences are their strengths. Since the last retreat, all of our residents who sat for exams passed them, three women have brought children into the world, and they have all been a support for each other in the tough times of residency.



We ask that you continue to pray for our group - that each resident would feel a sense of belonging and confidence in God's calling on her life!

DRS. BOB AND ANDREA PARKER RECEIVE ACS/PFIZER ACADEMIC GLOBAL SURGERY AWARD



Congratulations to PAACS Faculty Drs. Bob and Andrea Parker! They received the ACS/Pfizer Academic Global Surgeon Award for their near decade of service educating surgical trainees in a medically under-resourced country. Both Drs. Parker have been serving at Tenwek Hospital in Kenya since 2014, training and discipling African physicians to become excellent and compassionate surgeons. [Read more](#) from the American College of Surgeons.





IMAGO DEI AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO WHOLE PERSON CARE, PART I

*Ed Scarce, ThM, DMin
Spiritual Dean*

A person's worldview impacts everything they say and do! That is true in every area of life. Especially in the field of medicine does one's worldview play a significant role in the kind of medical care given to an individual.

Our guiding principle for this is found in the events of creation. On the last day of creation, God said:

*“Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.”
(Genesis 1:26)*

God is finishing his work of creation with a “personal touch.” We are then told:

*“... the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”
(Genesis 2:7)*

Consequently, humanity is unique among all of God's creations, having both a material body and an immaterial soul/spirit. Thus, we resemble God. Not in the flesh and blood sense, for God is Spirit. Yet we do see the manifestation of God in the incarnate Jesus Christ.

The image of God refers to the immaterial part of humanity. It is a likeness mentally, morally, and socially. It sets us apart from the rest of creation. It is why God granted to us “dominion over the earth.” That dominion is a sacred stewardship. In addition, “imago dei” enables us to have a relationship with our creator.

Being created in the image of God impacts us in the field of surgery in at least three ways. In this issue, we will look at the **mental impact**:

It is God that has given us the capacity to think and reason. This includes the responsibility of making choices. It is a reflection of God's intellect and freedom to create and make decisions. No, our mental powers are not even close to God's. However, every time someone writes a book, invents a life-saving device, or comes up with a less invasive surgical procedure, it proclaims the image of God in us. We can take no pride in this truth. Only thankfulness that it is true.

So, when we are standing before our patients and deciding what regimen of treatment is required, it is God who gives us the mental capacity to make good choices. We need to keep in mind that the patient also has the capacity to think and make decisions.

In next month's bulletin we will look into both the moral and social impact and its relationship with whole person care. You may read “Imago Dei and Its Relationship to Whole Person Care, Part II” in the December PAACS Bulletin.



RESIDENT PROFILE

DR. BRAD-LOT IGIRANEZA

General Surgery Resident
SIM Galmi Hospital
Niger

Growing up in the midst of a civil war in Burundi, Dr. Brad-Lot Igiraneza's childhood was marked by hardship. Raised by his grandparents, he eagerly awaited the occasional visits from his parents during the school year. However, one trimester, his parents failed to visit, leaving him deeply concerned. Upon returning home, he discovered the heartbreaking truth: his parents had fallen seriously ill and were unable to access medical care due to the long distance to the nearest clinic. This revelation ignited a fire within him. He had a burning desire to become a doctor where he could alleviate not only his parents' suffering but also that of countless others who couldn't access the care they desperately needed.

In his village, Dr. Igiraneza learned about a local doctor within the church who was performing life-saving work, despite the clinic being over an hour's walk away. The impact of this doctor's efforts deeply impressed him. It solidified his commitment to pursue a career in medicine rooted in his passion from childhood.

During his time at Hope Africa University, he crossed paths with Dr. Alliance Niyukuri, a PAACS graduate who had just finished his PAACS residency in Gabon. Dr. Niyukuri shared the vision of PAACS and the mission of serving Africa with surgical care and the message of hope found in Jesus Christ, particularly in underserved regions. Dr. Igiraneza reflected on the difficulties his parents endured when seeking medical help and saw this as a calling to return to such regions, armed not only with surgical skills, but a deep desire to share the gospel.

For nearly two years now, Dr. Igiraneza has been training at SIM Galmi Hospital in Niger, witnessing incredible transformations in the lives of his patients and himself. Despite being fluent in both English and French, sometimes he faces language barriers in Niger and requires a translator. However, he recognizes that language doesn't limit his ability to share the love of Christ.

Recently, he experienced a touching moment with a patient who approached him and spoke through a translator. They expressed a deep appreciation for his care and were touched by the way he was able to show love and happiness even though he didn't know their language. This heartfelt interaction was a powerful reminder to Dr. Igiraneza that it's not just his words, but he can be the light of Christ in his actions and throughout every facet of his work.

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PAACS GRADUATES INDUCTED AS ACS FELLOWS



Congratulations to PAACS graduates Drs. Gezahegn Tilahun and Ron Tubasiime who were recently inducted as fellows of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Tilahun is pictured, right, with Dr. Tim Love, PAACS General Surgery Program Director at Soddo Christian Hospital.

PETER NTHUMBA RECEIVES 2023 NOORDHOFF HUMANITARIAN AWARD



Plastic Surgery The Meeting

Dr. Peter Nthumba, Plastic Surgery Program Director at AIC Kijabe Hospital, received the 2023 Noordhoff Humanitarian Award during 'Plastic Surgery The Meeting' in Austin, Texas, on October 28. Dr. Nthumba presented a lecture on "Global Surgery: The War Against The Surgical Burden of Disease – A Winning Strategy." [Click here to read more from Plastic Surgery The Meeting.](#)

WEDDING CELEBRATION IN NIGERIA



Congratulations to PAACS Galmi resident Dr. Aminat Fagbenro on her marriage to Chinkinan Manasseh Tongkwut in Nigeria.

NEW BABY AT NKHOMA MISSION HOSPITAL



Congratulations to PAACS Nkhoma resident Dr. Vitumbiko Erwin Mwafulirwa and wife, Angella, on the birth of their first-born son, Elwyn. The PAACS Nkhoma family gathered together to celebrate his one-month birthday, bringing life to the saying "it takes a village to raise a child."



APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN: AFRICAN SURGEONS TO UNDER-SERVED COMMUNITIES

*Deborah Eisenhut, MD
Faculty
Mbingo Baptist Hospital*

The global mission organization, SIM, and the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS) have started a partnership to help place highly trained Christian African surgeons and related specialists in mission hospitals in under-served locations across Africa through a program entitled 'African Surgeons to Under-served Communities' (ASUC). PAACS has long been training African surgeons and related specialists through a 5-year residency program to help meet the need of thousands of Africans who still have little to no access to affordable, quality surgical, anesthesia or obstetric care. SIM has been placing African missionaries in ministry locations around the world and has medical ministry workers serving in more than 50 countries.

This partnership will provide African missionary surgeons and related specialists with supplemental missionary support for a period of time so that they can work in these under-served locations. African missionaries often find it challenging to raise financial support and mission hospitals in remote locations often find it difficult to pay adequate salaries to surgeons. The extra time will allow both the African missionary surgeon and the mission hospital time to raise funds so that the surgeon can continue to serve at that location. These surgeons can be members of any mission organization and can serve in any mission hospital in Africa that meets the set criteria for participation.

Applicants must be PAACS graduate surgeons who are serving with or who are applying to be part of a sending mission organization. Acceptance into the program (ASUC) will be contingent upon acceptance as a missionary. Sending mission organizations must provide training and on-going member care. Preference will be given to missionary surgeons who will be serving in areas unreached with the Gospel.

PAACS and SIM are excited to announce the opening of the ASUC project for applications beginning October 1, 2023 and ending February 29, 2024. An application can be obtained at the [link below](#). For questions, please contact Dr. Eisenhut via email Deborah.Eisenhut@sim.org (preferred) or via phone/WhatsApp at +1 (503)-884-0528. If there is no answer, please leave a detailed message. Hospitals in need of such surgeons can also contact Dr. Eisenhut for more information.

Please pray for generous funding of this initiative and that it will result in both improved surgical care and the making of disciples for Jesus Christ in under-served areas in Africa. To give, visit www.sim.org/donate. Write in 'African Surgeons for Under-Served Communities' or type in the project number—099771.

**CLICK HERE
FOR THE APPLICATION**

PRAY

- Pray for God's favor over all PAACS training programs across Africa. Pray for the PAACS Programs in Gabon, Niger, and Togo specifically as the countries are under strain.
- May God sustain, protect, and provide His grace to all PAACS residents, faculty, graduates, and their families.
- Pray for all PAACS residents preparing for COSECSA Exams in December.
- Pray for God's wisdom and guidance for the Board of Directors, leadership, and administrative staff as they seek to faithfully lead the PAACS ministry.
- 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.

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

- Minyali Lomnyaki
- Verdiana Vedasto Mwijage
- Henry Cosmas Takule
- Faraja Magwesela
- Dickla Jackson Mollel
- James Justin James
- Baptist Augustino Matonya
- Frida Kokushubira Fidelis
- Peter Ally Kayange
- Lilian Emmanuel Tarimo
- Ernest Damas Babu

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ARTICLES ON SURGERY

Compiled by Margaret Tarpley

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- [Optimizing ergonomics during open, laparoscopic, and robotic-assisted surgery: A review of surgical ergonomics literature and development of educational illustrations.](#)
- [JAMA Otolaryngology–Head & Neck Surgery.](#)
- [Impact of discontinuing oxytocin in active labour on neonatal morbidity: an open-label, multicentre, randomised trial.](#)
- [Delaying umbilical cord clamping for two minutes cuts deaths in premature babies, studies show.](#)
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- [Treatment of lower urinary tract symptoms in men in primary care using a conservative intervention: cluster randomised controlled trial.](#)
- [The Need for Children's surgical Care Prioritisation in national surgical Care policies: A Systematic Review of National Surgical Obstetric and Anaesthetic Plans \(NSOAPs\) in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)
- [Strengthening emergency care provision in a non-emergency physician run emergency department – Experience from the Eastern Cape, South Africa.](#)

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