



THE PAACS BULLETIN

Monthly Newsletter
Issue #233
December 2023



*The PAACS General Surgery Program
at Galmi Hospital celebrates the graduation
of Dr. Sadock Irankunda*



*Drs. Mehret Enaro and Britney Grayson
at COSECSA Graduation Celebration*



*PAACS Litein Resident Dr. Talaam Ruth and
husband Joshua with new baby Gareth*

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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,

*Susan Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer*

As we approach the end of 2023, I trust you had a joyful Christmas and are looking forward to a year filled with blessings in 2024. I am excited to share that the coming year holds a number of incredible opportunities for PAACS. This is due to the grace of God and the hard work of our dedicated administration, board of directors, and volunteers.

In January, we will eagerly welcome over 40 new residents to join the PAACS family. With their arrival, we will grow to over 170 residents and fellows in training. Additionally, we are beginning two brand new training programs. One will be a general surgery program in Angola at CEML, welcoming two new residents and marking PAACS' presence in its 12th African country. The other is a pediatric orthopaedic program, a collaboration between CURE-Addis in Ethiopia and CURE-Kijabe in Kenya.

Next month, we will also host our Seniors Conference for our fifth-year residents, equipping them for their final year of training before they embark on their new journey of a surgical or specialty ministry. But that's not all—we have exciting news! In just a few days, we will unveil our fresh PAACS logo and branding, and we cannot wait to share it with you.

Moving into February, our new first-year residents will attend the Basic Science Conference in Kenya. This is a crucial step in learning more about the PAACS organization and building a strong foundation for their upcoming five years of training. They will spend time in the Bible and worship every morning, followed by numerous hands-on workshops and educational seminars.

Then, mark your calendars for our upcoming PAACS Conference scheduled for April 11-13, 2024 in Chicago, IL. We also have plans to participate in a variety of missions conferences in the months ahead. PAACS has been given a tremendous opportunity to highlight our work at a dinner for the National Christian Foundation. Furthermore, we have two exciting fundraising events on the horizon—a thrilling ski event in Montana in February and a concert featuring award-winning Christian artist Steven Curtis Chapman in Indiana in June.

As we embrace the potential of 2024, we wish you a happy and joyous new year and we kindly request your continued prayers for PAACS. May God bless the work of our hands and the desires of our hearts.

Blessings,

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

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P.S. If you haven't had the chance to contribute to PAACS this year, please send in your generous donation before December 31st. We are relying on your support to meet our God-sized goal of a little over \$950,000 for the month of December.



COSECSA EXAMS & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Keir Thelander, MD
Executive Vice President

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from December 2nd to 3rd, 17 PAACS trainees and graduates sat for their oral exams with COSECSA, in addition to four PAACS faculty members. Praise the Lord: all 21 were successful! The newly minted graduates received their results while at the PAACS-hosted celebration dinner on Tuesday night. Over 60 attendees rejoiced at the positive results for trainees: 2 Pediatric Surgeons, 3 Orthopaedic Surgeons, 11 General Surgeons, and the first PAACS-trained Neurosurgeon, Dr. Emmanuel Wafula. Additionally, Dr. Joseph Nderitu of the PAACS Kijabe General Surgery program received the top exam score award in General Surgery, the first PAACS graduate to win the award since 2019. Congratulations Dr. Nderitu! PAACS is thankful Dr. Nderitu will be staying on at Kijabe hospital, keeping with the PAACS focus on 2 Timothy 2:2. We are grateful for the over 40 PAACS friends who chose to be examiners in a variety of disciplines who offered their time and expertise to be a part of credentialing another group of surgeons who will be practicing throughout the region. The graduation ceremony celebrated the success of over 240 new surgeons who will now help strengthen those already working tirelessly in their areas.

The scientific meeting took place on Thursday and Friday, which was extremely well attended with high quality research presentations, while including many international networking opportunities. Specifically, Dr. Britney Grayson, PAACS Pediatric Surgeon based at BethanyKids, Kijabe, led the all-day Friday Research Workshop entitled “Fundamentals of Surgical Research Course and Scientific Writing Workshop” with 80 registrants which was sponsored by Association for Academic Surgery, Intuitive Foundation, The Annals of African Surgery, the Surgical Society of Ethiopia, and COSECSA.





LOMA LINDA SITE VISIT TO KENYA NOVEMBER 27 – DECEMBER 2, 2023

*John Tarpley, MD
Academic Dean*

In the USA, pursuing medicine is a multi-step process: an undergraduate degree, medical school, residency (three-five years), then for some, specialty fellowship (one-three years). Whereas in most of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the fortunate few - straight from high school - enter a six-year university program combining undergraduate and medical school. Usually a one-year internship plus possibly an additional year of government service follow before pursuing specialty training. Postgraduate residency positions are few in number. PAACS addresses that need.

PAACS programs (surgery, anesthesiology, obstetrics & gynecology) currently follow a USA system of post graduate medical education. Our programs vary from four to eight years depending on specialty. Programs in pediatric surgery, neurosurgery, and cardiothoracic surgery are longer in duration than anesthesiology and Ob/Gyn (four years) or general and orthopaedic surgery (five years). Pediatric surgery can be either six or eight years in length if one completes five years of general surgery with three additional years of pediatric surgery vs. has a pediatric surgery track of two + four years.

In the USA, the ACGME (Accrediting Council for Graduate Medical Education) has RRCs (Residency Review Committees) which set requirements for residencies and fellowships. PAACS follows this model as well as complying with requirements from our SSA-credentialing body, the College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa (COSECSA), which was launched in 1999. Like the RRCs for various disciplines stateside, one such requirement historically has been an in-person site visit at least every five years if all is in order and more frequently if issues arise re: quality of education, the environment for the residents (call rooms, libraries, computer access, safety, work hours, etc.) plus the academic requirements such as basic science and clinical conferences, journal clubs, morbidity and mortality (M&M) conferences, etc.

Loma Linda University (LLU) School of Medicine, a Seventh Day Adventist institution south of Los Angeles, is vital for PAACS trainees' dual credentialing process. LLU's Dr. Mark E. Reeves, surgical oncologist and educator, has led PAACS site visits since 2016, reviewing and assessing programs' educational and physical assets. As PAACS has added programs (eleven since 2019), such expansions entail several visits to multiple training sites annually for Dr. Reeves and his team. The most recent site visit was to Kenya evaluating programs at Tenwek Hospital and AIC Litein Hospital in southwest Kenya plus consulting with the recently launched Ob/Gyn program at AIC Kijabe Hospital which is seeking a PAACS affiliation.

The LLU team led by Mark Reeves included Jukes Namm, surgical oncologist and general surgery residency Program Director and Kevin Balli, Ob-Gyn chair. PAACS-related colleagues accompanying the LLU personnel included John Newell, Boone, NC orthopaedic surgeon, Carter Harsh, Birmingham, AL neurosurgeon, and Jim Fingleton, Providence, RI cardiothoracic surgeon, plus PAACS Executive Vice President Keir Thelander and Academic Dean John Tarpley.





MBINGO: MUCH REASON FOR HOPE

*Jim Brown, MD
Alumni Liaison Committee
Former PAACS Program Director, Mbingo*

Ten months after our return from Cameroon, my wife Carolyn and I visited Mbingo for three weeks in October. I worked with the PAACS residents and faculty, and Carolyn taught and worked in wound care. Although the hospital had recently been through a lengthy lockdown, the roads were open, and we experienced no security incidents throughout our stay. The census in the hospital was low and the operating schedule light (very uncharacteristic for Mbingo), but increased gradually during our visit. Although the anglophone regions of Cameroon are in their sixth year of conflict, the intensity of fighting has reduced with only isolated incidents. The road between Bamenda and Mbingo needs to be repaired and upgraded, but is passable. The hospital monitors security on this road daily and runs a hospital van between Bamenda and Mbingo for patients each weekday.

The PAACS faculty at Mbingo are African nationals doing an outstanding job. The academic program is vibrant and strong, including the conference schedule, COSECSA training modules, mock oral boards, attending teaching rounds, and the spiritual curriculum. Patients are getting excellent care. Even though the census is low, the acuity of the patients is high because of Mbingo's reputation for specialty care. The internal medicine residency and head and neck fellowship add to the training environment. However, a lack of visitors and interaction with the international community through partnerships with university programs is lacking. This has detracted from the diversity of the PAACS residents' training experience. World Medical Mission is sponsoring approved visitors, and Mbingo has an excellent arrangement to receive and care for visiting faculty.

There is much reason for hope. Mbingo enjoys steady reliable hydroelectric power from its own turbine. Construction on the bunker for a linear accelerator is progressing. When radiation therapy is available, along with the strong medical and surgical oncology programs already in place, Mbingo will be the most advanced cancer center in the country. Mbingo is also being considered as the site of a new pediatric hospital. A final decision on the site for the peds hospital depends on whether security and access to the hospital can be guaranteed.

I enjoyed working with residents again and catching up on relationships with the staff, friends, and patients. Mbingo still plays a pivotal role in Cameroon, PAACS, and Africa, but the training programs need visitors and outside connections to remain healthy and to avoid becoming ingrown.





GALMI HOSPITAL GRADUATION

*K. Shafer, MD
Program Director
Galmi Hospital*

On November 11th, the PAACS Galmi General Surgery Residency Program graduated our 10th graduate, Dr. Sadock Irankunda from Burundi. We were excited to celebrate the ceremony with Dr. Joe Starke, the first program director, and his wife Mame who were founding members. Dr. Starke was able to share a message about the purpose of PAACS and encourage our residents and graduate.

Dr. Irankunda was praised for his example of love of God and prayer, his compassionate and gentle spirit with patients and fellow residents, and his flexibility and joy even despite difficulties. We are excited for how God is going to continue to guide Dr. Irankunda, his wife Albine, and children Asa and Eran as they continue to serve Him.





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

*Ed Searce, ThM, DMin
Spiritual Dean*

In the last edition of the PAACS Bulletin we began to look at three ways being created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26) impacts the quality of medical care given to one's patients. The first was the mental impact it has on each of us. Now let's look at the moral and social impact:

MORALLY:

Humanity was created in perfect righteousness, a reflection of God's holiness. Adam and Eve were created in perfect health and were not subject to death. That innocence of morality and physical perfection was lost when sin entered the picture at the fall. However, the standard of morality did not change, which means that we are not the standard makers. We are the keepers of the standard God has already established.

This has an impact on the way we treat individuals, on the prescribed treatments that we make. What would be the right and moral thing to do according to God's standard of righteousness? This trumps all other creeds or professional principles or secular laws that violate God's righteousness.

We must keep in mind that our patients (we) are morally fallen and thus their actions and lifestyles impact their physical well-being. Many patients will likely be in need precisely because of bad moral practices. Yet, because they are created in the image of God, they need our best care and concern. We cannot and must not discriminate. This means the intoxicated driver who crashed into another vehicle as they ran the red light, resulting in the death of three innocent people, is deserving of the best care we can give. That is true only because they are made in the image of God.

SOCIALLY:

Humans are social beings by God's design. We were designed for fellowship and companionship. That is why God created us male and female. Every time we greet someone with a smile or hug, we are acting upon the image of God in us. Research has shown that when individuals are socially separated from others, it has a major impact on their physical and mental well-being.

Each patient is a social being. They need contact and fellowship. Many who come for medical care are in need of a social touch. Some have been ostracized precisely because of their illness. This is especially true in other cultures.

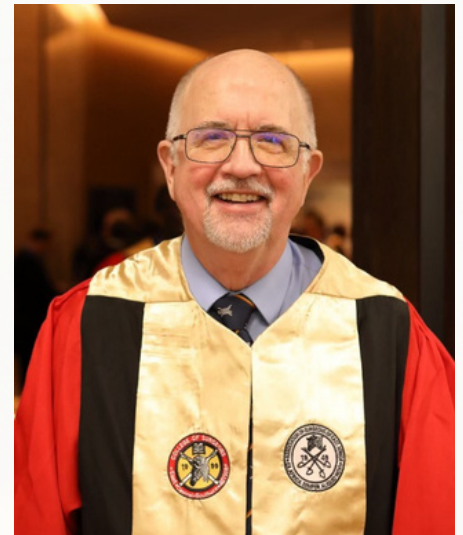
This puts the doctor, nurse, or surgeon in a strategic position to not only minister to their physical needs but the need to be valued socially. This includes the contact you as a medical professional may have with their families.

The reality that God has created humanity uniquely different from every other part of His creation has a tremendous bearing on the way we interact with our fellow humans. This is never more critical than in the relationship between a patient, their family, and their medical provider. May God help us to view everyone with the care and respect deserving of a fellow image bearer.

HONORARY FELLOWSHIP BESTOWED ON PAACS FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. BRUCE STEFFES

*Keir Thelander, MD
Executive Vice President*

On Wednesday during the COSECSA graduation ceremony, time was taken to acknowledge the significant contributions to COSECSA by three dedicated individuals. Dr. Girma Tefara, of Ethiopian descent, working in Wisconsin and leading the ACS H.O.P.E. (formerly Operation Giving Back, now Health Outreach Program for Equity) was honored for his significant contributions to the College, followed by Dr. Christopher Lavy, an Orthopaedic Surgeon from the UK who has demonstrated consistent work in the regions for decades. These honors culminated with acknowledging Dr. Bruce Steffes. While his biography was being read by COSECSA Secretary General Professor Abebe Bekele, a portion included an extremely lengthy list of countries where Bruce has contributed of his time and expertise. During this portion, of course, quite a few African countries were listed, which prompted an impromptu applause from the audience. This clearly demonstrated their appreciation for Dr. Steffes' dedicated work not only for COSECSA, but for the continent of Africa. PAACS congratulates Dr. Steffes and thanks him for his example of selfless service to those in need of surgical care and training. Thank you, Bruce!



AZMERA STATESIDE SUMMIT: MISSION EVENT FOR WOMEN

AZMERA STATESIDE Summit

A MISSION EVENT FOR WOMEN
FEBRUARY 1-3, 2024 in DALLAS, TX

Connect
with globally-minded women.

Network
to enhance your role in missions.

Learn
from the best, in person.

The Azmera Stateside Summit will take place February 1-3, 2024, in Dallas, Texas. This is a unique event for all women interested in Kingdom work around the world.

For more information, visit <https://www.azmera.net/stateside> or email becca.azmera@gmail.com.





NEW BABY BORN TO LITEIN RESIDENT



Litein Resident Dr. Talaam Ruth and husband Joshua were blessed with baby Gareth Onyangoon November 17. Gareth was born a few weeks premature, so he stayed in the nursery for three weeks. Mom and baby are now at home and doing well. Praise God!

GALMI RESIDENT WELCOMES A SON

First year Galmi PAACS Resident Dr. Melance Kabanyegeye and his wife Emelyne welcomed their first son, Ishimwe Abi Chris, on November 24th.

Dr. Kabanyegeye says, "I thank the Lord for what He is doing in my life, arming me with all kinds of armor for his kingdom: surgical skills, spiritual growth, and parenthood. What a grace!"



PRAISE REPORT FROM SODDO/CURE



A praise report from the Soddo/CURE PAACS Ortho residency is the successful completion of MCS ECSA by Dr. Naol Jigi who is moving into the Orthopaedic training in January. Congratulations, Dr. Jigi!

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.
- Pray for the newest residents beginning their journey with PAACS in January 2024. May they be blessed with God's favor and grace.
- 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.
- Pray for the newest graduates of PAACS, may they follow God's will for their lives and find their place to serve Him by caring for the underserved people of Africa.

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

- Matiko Bethleen Waisiko
- Mehret Enaro
- Muse Frenah Anito
- Stephen Katia Kitheka
- Dimingo Gomez
- Catherine Jackson-Cole
- Isaac Wanjala
- Anya James Andrew
- Merlene Ishimwe



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ARTICLES ON SURGERY

Compiled by Margaret Tarpley

- [Fertility, Family, and a Career in Surgery—Time to Change the Narrative.](#)
- [Pregnancy and parenthood in surgical training: a cross-sectional survey in the UK.](#)
- [Case Volumes, Variations, and Challenges for General Surgery Training in the East, Central, and Southern African Sub-Region: Heterogeneity and Challenges as COSECSA Concludes Its First Twenty-Four Years.](#)
- [This Barbie is a surgeon.](#)
- [Investing in the Surgical Healthcare of Children in the First 8000 Days of Life.](#)
- [The American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of Rectal Cancer 2023 Supplement.](#)
- [Laparoscopic lateral duodenojejunosomy for pediatric superior mesenteric artery compression syndrome: a cohort retrospective study.](#)
- [ACS Releases Revised Best Practices Guidelines in Geriatric Trauma Management.](#)
- [A Systematic Literature Review of Demographics, Clinical Presentation and Surgical Procedures Performed for the Appendico-Umbilical Fistula for the Past 100 Years.](#)
- [Critical care delivery across health care systems in low-income and low-middle-income country settings: A systematic review.](#)
- [Emerging Optimism in Paediatric Surgery in Africa.](#)

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