



My Help Comes from the Lord

DR. SAMA AKANYUN

My name is Sama Akanyun. I am from Cameroon. I was born and raised in a Christian home and attended a Baptist church where I was baptized. As I entered adulthood, I chose to become a doctor and attended medical school in Buea, Cameroon. As I learned and experienced more about the world of medicine, surgery became my passion.



I first heard of PAACS in 2013 while working as a general practitioner at Mbingo Baptist Hospital. PAACS residents there encouraged my interest in surgery and convinced me to look no further. They were often in scrubs, moving fast, and super busy, but always with smiles on their faces. At one point, I spoke with Dr. Gerald Ekwen, a senior PAACS resident at the time (now a graduate), and gathered more information about PAACS. It was exactly what I needed.

Next, I applied for a one-month rotation in the surgery department. It was the highlight of my journey as a general practitioner. From that point on, I wanted to become a surgeon... a PAACS resident... a PAACS attending... there was no turning back. And God was so faithful. I was selected to begin on August 1, 2014, and became the first female PAACS resident at Mbingo, a.k.a. "The Queen of Surgery". My first 72 hours on call as a resident were a real test. It was a baptism by fire.

Eventually, I got married during my residency, and in March 2018, while still a resident, my husband and I were blessed with a bouncing baby boy. Juggling family, motherhood, and residency was not an easy walk in the park. But nothing is impossible with God at the center of it all. Then in November 2019, a few months after completing my five solid years of residency, God blessed us with a baby girl.

Surgery is the most humbling profession. It requires your full attention plus 99.9% (and sometimes more) of your time. But you get to see, touch, and become a part of the marvelous works of God. There was a patient who at first didn't look as if he would make it through the night. But he survived his first surgery. I spoke with his family members about his very poor prognosis. Yet, he survived his second surgery, and then his third, and then his fourth. Each time I looked at him, I saw the power of the Most High God. He is a breathing, walking, talking testimony to God's ways. His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts.

Being part of the PAACS family is a great blessing, and I am so thankful to everyone who helped make it possible. Teaching new residents and young doctors is an honor, a legacy, and a recipe for growth. Please join in prayer for Cameroon. For over four years, there has been civil unrest in the English speaking Northwest and Southwest Regions. Mbingo Baptist Hospital has been in the midst of that unrest and violence.

"I would lift up my eyes unto the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Ps 121:1-2



Dear PAACS Family

Merry Christmas!

I pray this edition of the PAACS Alumni Newsletter finds you doing well despite the persistent pandemic. This year started with hope and a new perspective when, in January 2021, COVID-19 seemed to be under better control and the vaccine was released. But in the next few months, case numbers and new variants of the virus began to rapidly increase, leading to yet another wave of widespread illness.

The pandemic still hampers our daily activities, but it has also rewired our minds in ways that encourage us to go on to touch people's lives positively. It gives us a chance to approach life with new clarity as we share the love and hope that is found in Christ Jesus. Let us keep our eyes focused on Him, for He will renew our strength and use us for His glory and praise.

We hope these stories will be a source of encouragement and inspiration as we continue to use our skills to serve and share the love of our Great Master, Jesus Christ.

Many Blessings,
Lemfuka A. Dieudonne, MD
PAACS Graduate
Editor of the Alumni Newsletter

21 Countries with PAACS Graduates



118 Graduate
Certificates Issued

The Greatest Gift of My Life

DR. FASTO YUGUSUK



I was born and raised in the village of Lobonok (Juba) in Sudan in a Christian family. I had three sisters and three brothers. My discipleship journey began early, starting from the time I received my baptism and gave my life to Christ. I immediately became an 'Altar Boy'.

The civil war broke out in Sudan in 1983. The next 14 years resulted in the death of more than 1.5 million Sudanese through 1997. At that time, communication and travel were not permitted by the government armies, and any attempt to do so was a serious risk, especially for men and boys. We were locked up in Lobonok village which was controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Army, and we were not able to join my dad in Juba. Thank God our mom was with us.

Due to this crisis, I started school late, but attended from 1994 until I graduated from medical school in 2011 with a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBBS) degree from the University of Bahr El Ghazai (Khartoum). The same year I graduated from medical school, my country, South Sudan, separated from the North. On July 9, 2011, we celebrated the country's birth, and I was a part of the medical team covering the event. I then returned and completed my House Officer / Intern training at Juba Teaching Hospital.

In November 2012, I met Dr. Lewis Zirkle, President and Founder of Sign Fracture Care International. It was an eye opener for me. I shared my interest with him in continuing with orthopaedic training during his visit to Juba. He launched a Sign Nail program in my hospital (Juba Teaching Hospital) as the first orthopaedic surgery to be done there. Prior to that time, we used to do debridement and splint or skeletal traction due to the lack of qualified surgeons and implants. At that time, there were only two orthopaedic surgeons in the entire country. He asked me, "Are you in training? Do you need a program in which to train? I would like to help you." This was the beginning of my orthopaedic surgery journey.

We estimate one PAACS Graduate will touch approximately

2,752 lives

in one year, through clinical and surgical procedures.

Combining all current PAACS Graduates, over an estimated 25 year career, approximately

7.5 million lives

can be touched.

Over the last year, PAACS Graduates have led approximately

230 patients

into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Based on 2021 PAACS Alumni Survey*

I thank Almighty God for giving me the opportunity to be part of PAACS. It is one of the greatest gifts of my life. I am forever grateful. Dr. Zirkle encouraged me to apply for a residency position with PAACS at Tenwek Hospital under the leadership of Dr. Daniel Galat, Director of Orthopaedic Surgery at that time. As a result, I completed my orthopaedic training and graduated in 2018 as the first PAACS orthopaedic graduate at Tenwek. I also had an opportunity to work with Dr. Dan Poenaru, a pediatric surgeon at MCM Hospital in Ethiopia in 2013 before joining the PAACS program in 2014.

It was also a new life for my wife, Anita, and our growing family. During our five years at Tenwek in Kenya, our family grew bigger with additional babies and an extended PAACS family that continues to pray for us to this day. My best memories from those years are the friendships I made among my fellow surgical residents and attendings as well as the hospital staff. After graduation, because of the unrest, I was not able to head back to South Sudan Juba Teaching Hospital to assume a role the hospital so badly needed. The South Sudan crisis is known all over the world, yet still there is no peace, no stability, and no security. The economy is in crisis, and nothing can change without peace. Please remember South Sudan in your prayers.

My journey continued at AIC Cure International Mission Hospital in Kijabe, Kenya, to save children's lives, defend their rights, and help them fulfill their potential that their early childhood orthopaedic conditions inhibited. PAACS residency training and working directly with attendings were fruitful experiences. I have now finished my additional 2-3 years of the pediatric orthopaedic fellowship program in January this year, with a subspecialty in pediatric orthopaedic surgery. I am now a pediatric orthopaedic consultant who dreamt as a child to be a computer scientist, but at the age of 15 years developed a passion for medicine and aspired to be a doctor. I am currently serving as Assistant Program Director at the AIC Kijabe orthopaedic training program. My role is teaching and working with team members across the hospital who inspire me to grow in every aspect of my life.

It has been a decade since my orthopaedic journey began in 2012, and my continuing desire is to provide orthopaedic assistance to the hard to reach areas of the world.

Testimony of Dr. Fasto's Patient

This patient underwent surgery on her right foot. She thought she could never wear a closed shoe. But after her surgery, she has been able to wear one for the first time and has returned to us with praise and thanksgiving. Praise be to God the Father and the training and experience from PAACS.

Here is what she wrote:

To my Surgeon Fasto,

Thank you for your tremendous skill in performing my operation. I can never thank you enough for all your services. Through you God gave me a new life. You are truly a lifesaver; I will always pray to God for your betterment.

Thank you, again,

Phyllis Injeri.

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