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ACS H.O.P.E. Quarterly Report

Message from Dr. Girma

ACS H.O.P.E. Medical Director



We at ACS H.O.P.E. are excited about the growing subspecialty engagement in global health and surgery across all three partnership hubs in Hawassa (Ethiopia), Kigali (Rwanda), and Lusaka (Zambia). This new surgical specialty-focused participation allows for more targeted collaboration and the development of advanced expertise within some of the key subspecialties in surgery, such as Transplant Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Cardiothoracic Surgery, Plastic Surgery, and Trauma/Critical Care. These collaborations support and foster an environment where real transfer of knowledge occurs.

We are particularly thrilled to see the increasing interest in global health research among our US and partner institution residents. This enthusiasm is reflected in the growing requests we receive from our US trainees for elective international rotations and research experience at partnership hubs. With the support of our partners, ACS H.O.P.E. is building a strong research culture that encourages young faculty and residents to explore new ideas and find innovative solutions to improve patient care and strengthen systems everywhere.

Our collective effort across all the hubs is setting a new example of a well-coordinated, collaborative, mutually beneficial, and sustainable partnership.

Surgical Training Hub Updates

Kigali, Rwanda

The second quarter of the year marked a series of significant contributions to the ACS H.O.P.E. Surgical Training Collaborative in Kigali, Rwanda. These engagements, encompassing specializations in plastics, maxillofacial, microsurgery, and thoracic surgery, exemplified the efficacy of global partnerships in enhancing surgical proficiency and patient outcomes.



Dr. Greg Evans and Dr. Steve Roser with Rwanda residents and colleagues, April 2024.

Plastics & Maxillofacial Surgery (April 1-6, 2024)

Initiating the quarter, a specialized cadre of surgeons and healthcare professionals focused on advanced plastics and maxillofacial surgical procedures.

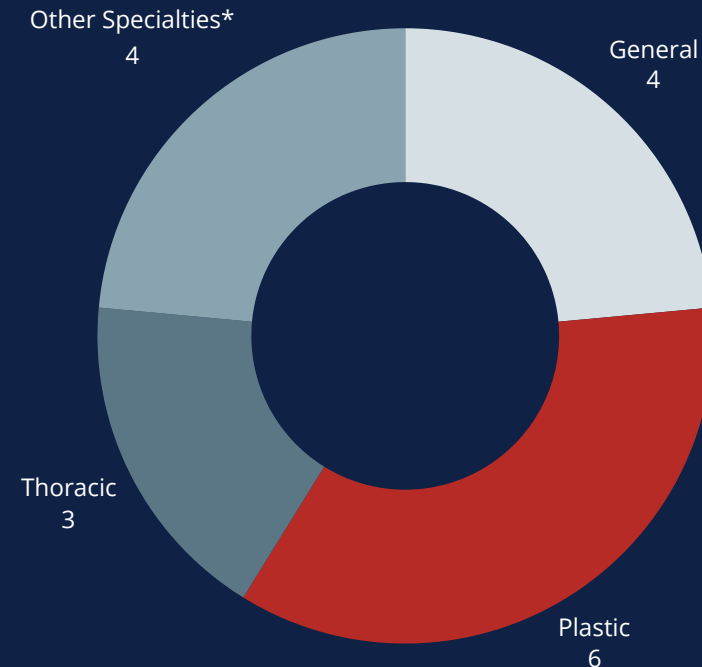
With a planning period of over 55 days, this endeavor synergized the capabilities of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), King Faisal Hospital (KFH), and the University Teaching Hospital of Kigali (CHUK).

Throughout this period, two U.S. surgeons integrated with three local practitioners to address seven intricate cases, accumulating 24 clinical hours and 10 educational hours. The collective surgical expertise, totaling 79 years, delivered substantial and immediate enhancements in patient care.

Dr. Gregory Evans detailed in his report the critical surgical innovations implemented, which were central to addressing complex facial traumas. This educational exchange proved invaluable for local surgeons, boosting their competence in executing sophisticated reconstructive operations independently. Moreover, the mission evaluated a novel, cost-efficient reconstructive technique that showed promise, potentially setting a precedent for adoption in similarly constrained environments.

"I love this trip and love the site. The Rwandans are amazing hosts - the trip was incredibly well organized and informative, and it served as the bi-directional exchange that is so important." - US Volunteer

The House of Surgery™



17 surgeons donated a combined **1,096** hours of service this quarter - an approximate donation value of **\$130,907 USD**

*Other specialties include: Vascular, Pediatric, Trauma, and ENT

Advancements in Microsurgery (May 5-12, 2024)

The subsequent engagement focused intensively on the subtleties of microsurgery. Over 164 days of meticulous planning culminated in a mission that united ACS, KFH, and CHUK once more. Six U.S. delegates, including three adept surgeons, engaged intensively with Rwandan colleagues. They meticulously executed two complex microsurgical cases, dedicating 20 hours to both clinical and didactic interactions. An investment of \$5,000 in surgical supplies was made, ensuring the lasting impact of the training.



Plastic Surgery team in Kigali, 2024

Thoracic Surgery Innovations (May 20-24, 2024)

The quarter concluded with significant innovations in thoracic surgery. Over a 111-day planning period, this visit saw the collaborative efforts of six U.S. participants, including a leading surgeon, working alongside Rwandan medical professionals. They tackled five collaborative cases, dedicating 40 clinical hours to enhancing patient care. Additionally, a significant contribution of \$10,000 in surgical supplies was made, bolstering the resource availability for subsequent procedures.

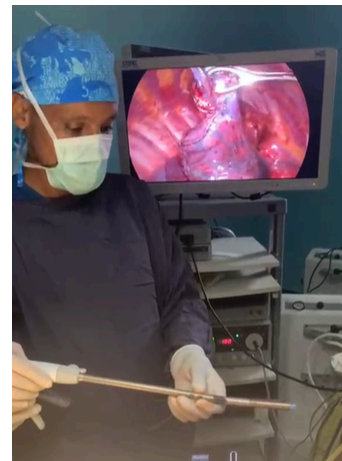
These visits are pivotal to the ACS H.O.P.E. program's mission of promoting global surgical education and fostering international collaborations. Through these initiatives, U.S. and Rwandan medical professionals are not only elevating their surgical competencies but also establishing sustainable global partnerships that are set to raise the bar for patient care standards internationally.

Hawassa, Ethiopia

The second quarter of 2024 has been a period of dynamic growth and significant achievements for the ACS H.O.P.E. Surgical Training Collaborative in Hawassa, Ethiopia. Through a series of specialized surgical volunteerism visits, the program has successfully bolstered the expertise of both local and international surgeons while addressing crucial healthcare needs. This quarter's activities have not only enhanced surgical skills but also reinforced the collaborative spirit essential for sustainable healthcare improvements.

Thoracic Surgery

One of the standout initiatives was the thoracic and general surgery visit led by Dr. Valerie Rusch and Dr. Shamus Carr. This mission focused on a comprehensive needs assessment and hands-on training at Hawassa University Comprehensive Specialized Hospital (HUSCH).



Dr. Siyasebew Mamo

Working closely with Dr. Siyasebew Mamo, the only general thoracic surgeon at the University, the team performed five surgical cases, participated in morning reports and ward rounds, and delivered an educational lecture on lung cancer management to surgical residents. The visit highlighted both significant progress and areas for further development.



Dr. Shamus Carr and Dr. Valerie Rusch at the Hawassa University Comprehensive Specialized Hospital

Drs. Rusch and Carr's report provided valuable insights into the advancements made and the challenges faced by the thoracic surgery program at Hawassa. Dr. Mamo, since joining the faculty in 2022, has established a busy clinical practice and has played a pivotal role in advancing thoracic anesthesia and OR nursing. The report also identified opportunities for improvement particularly in acquiring essential surgical equipment and enhancing sanitation standards in hospital facilities. These areas present clear targets for ongoing and future collaborative efforts.

In addition to the thoracic and general surgery mission, the quarter included visits focused on general surgery, pediatric surgery, and trauma and critical care. Each visit contributed to the overarching goal of enhancing surgical skills and patient care in Hawassa. The general surgery team navigated complex procedures and reinforced the importance of international partnerships. Pediatric surgery specialists addressed critical surgical needs, improving techniques and outcomes for young patients. The trauma and critical care visit emphasized the necessity of timely and effective treatment for trauma patients, enhancing critical care practices through close collaboration with local teams.

The collective efforts during these visits underscore the ACS H.O.P.E. program's commitment to advancing surgical education and practice in Ethiopia. These collaborations not only improve surgical skills but also foster enduring international partnerships, elevating patient care standards and addressing critical healthcare challenges. The progress made this quarter is a testament to the dedication and expertise of all involved and sets a strong foundation for continued advancements.

Overall, the second quarter of 2024 has demonstrated the power of collaborative efforts in global surgery. By addressing immediate needs and planning for future improvements, the ACS H.O.P.E. Surgical Training Collaborative continues to make significant strides in enhancing healthcare in Hawassa, Ethiopia.

Lusaka, Zambia

The second quarter of 2024 has heralded a transformative phase for the ACS H.O.P.E. Surgical Training Collaborative in Lusaka, Zambia, marked by a series of technical enhancements and surgical accomplishments. This period was characterized by targeted volunteerism efforts that significantly boosted the surgical acumen of both local practitioners and visiting teams, addressing critical gaps in healthcare provision while reinforcing vital collaborative frameworks essential for sustainable healthcare advancements.

April Workplan Meeting

Over the weekend of the ACS leadership and Advocacy Summit, representatives from both the Hawassa and Lusaka Surgical Training hubs gathered to discuss plans for the next few years of partnership. For the Lusaka participants, Dr. Victor Mapulanga and Dr. Charles Mbewe, the two surgical department heads, this was their first time in the United States. After participating in the meeting, both colleagues visited Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City and experienced the inner-workings of a US hospital while accompanied by Cornell volunteers, Dr. Robert Winchell, Dr. Cassandra Villegas, and Dr. Philip Chang.



Hawassa and Lusaka Hub Workplan Meeting in DC, 2024

Valuable Lessons

Both in and out of the OR

"[The visit] has reinforced the importance of patient-centered care in clinical practice." -Partner from Rwanda

"I learned how to find opportunities to contribute and what capacity building in global surgery means in practice." - US Volunteer

"Collaborating with visiting clinicians taught me effective communication, adaptability, and teamwork, emphasizing diverse perspectives and interdisciplinary collaboration for professional growth." - Partner from Rwanda

"Importance of collegiality and building bonds." -US Volunteer

"Clinical decision making in difficult situations" -Partner from Hawassa

"Understanding and realizing how scarcity of resources impacts hospitals and staff." -US Volunteer

This quarter's centerpiece was an intricate adrenal surgery initiative led by Dr. Robin Cisco. The mission unfolded at the University Teaching Hospital (UTH), Lusaka's principal medical facility, and involved a meticulously structured series of clinical engagements and educational workshops to refine local surgical techniques for adrenal tumor management. Key activities included advanced hands-on training sessions, where local teams were immersed in the nuances of diagnosing and managing complex adrenal pathologies.

Dr. Cisco's comprehensive debrief highlighted both the technical progress and the logistical hurdles encountered. Despite encountering significant challenges, such as the absence of essential laparoscopic tools and specialized surgical instruments, the team demonstrated remarkable adaptability and ingenuity, overcoming infrastructural deficits to deliver high-caliber surgical care.

In parallel, the quarter also featured rigorous missions focused on general, plastic, and reconstructive surgery. Each segment was critical in elevating local surgical standards and patient management protocols in Lusaka. The general surgery teams tackled complex multi-system cases, and reconstructive surgery specialists deployed innovative techniques to manage extensive soft tissue injuries. The endocrine surgery team deepened local expertise in managing intricate glandular disorders, crucially improving patient outcomes through refined surgical interventions.

Subcommittee Updates



Advocacy

Coalition BRIGHT

Our Advocacy Subcommittee is making significant progress in two key areas: enhancing equality in bidirectional clinical medical education and addressing visa challenges for foreign physicians.

To tackle these issues, the subcommittee has formed a coalition called BRIGHT (Building Reciprocal Initiatives for Global Health Training), which includes representatives from CUGH, SEED Global Health, the American College of Surgeons Division of Advocacy and Health Policy, and the US Military. This coalition is actively lobbying Congress for a new visa category tailored for foreign physicians seeking additional short-term hands-on medical training in the United States. Coalition BRIGHT is finalizing mission and vision statements, preparing to launch a web page, and working on approvals for a one-page statement outlining concerns and requests for Congress.

In addition, the subcommittee is working with the Association of Academic Global Surgery to survey state medical licensing laws to facilitate short-term medical licensure. Legal experts are helping address medical liability issues.

Global Health Council

The mission of the Global Health Council is to use the power of the collective voice to improve global health and wellbeing through informed investments and policies.

The ACS H.O.P.E. Advocacy Subcommittee has appointed members to GHC working groups. Subcommittee members participate in and represent the ACS in the following workgroups: Budget and Appropriations, Multilateral Engagement, and Health System Strengthening.

Domestic

Domestic Volunteerism Initiatives

The ACS H.O.P.E. Domestic Subcommittee is currently conducting a deep dive into the responses from its recent survey of domestic programs. The goal is to identify one clinical and one nonclinical program to focus on partnering to facilitate and enhance Domestic Volunteerism. This initiative aims to bolster volunteer opportunities within the US, leveraging the ACS's extensive network and resources.

Additionally, the subcommittee is working on an editorial for the ACS Bulletin that will address the state of Domestic Volunteerism in the United States. This piece will highlight current challenges and opportunities and outline the subcommittee's strategy for increasing volunteer engagement among our members.

ACS Partnership with HMARIA, Inc. and Puerto Rican Medical Schools

ACS H.O.P.E.'s partnership with H-MARIA and medical schools in Puerto Rico has been thriving. Over the 2023-2024 academic year, the subcommittee has jointly conducted 15 cyber-lectures and established mentor/mentee relationships between ACS fellows and over 20 students.

We are proud to share the outstanding match results of the students involved in these lectures and mentoring:

- **Gabriel Figueroa** - General Surgery at the University of Puerto Rico
- **Hermes Augusto** - General Surgery at the University of Puerto Rico
- **Francisco Gómez** - General Surgery at St. Luke's Hospital
- **Miguel Cartagena** - Orthopedic Surgery at HCA Florida University of Miami
- **Héctor Muñoz** - General Surgery (Preliminary) at the University of Puerto Rico
- **Sebastián Jimenez** - Diagnostic Radiology at the University of Florida-Jacksonville
- **Stephanie Sánchez** - Dermatology at Boston University

Last year, all three students who applied matched successfully. This year, the program surpassed expectations, with seven students matching.

International

ACS/AWS/COSECSA Scholarship Program for Women Surgeons

This program aims to increase the number of female surgeons practicing in the East, Central, and Southern Regions of Africa. The International Subcommittee's Scholarship Subcommittee has been:

- Collaborating with the COSECSA leadership to increase the number of scholars applying for FCS program fee support. More efforts will be spent marketing the scholarships across the 14 member COSECSA countries.

DC02: GLOBAL HEALTH COMPETENCIES FOR SURGEONS

*Key Concepts, Evidence, and Practical Approaches
for Responsible and Effective Engagement in LMICs*



Enhance Your Global Health Fundamentals

Gain essential knowledge and skills in key concepts, evidence, and practical approaches for responsible and effective surgical engagement in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).



Build Valuable Connections

Network with leading experts and like-minded professionals dedicated to advancing global health equity through surgery, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing.



Discover Involvement Opportunities

Learn about various pathways to contribute to global health initiatives, opening doors to impactful involvement in LMICs and making a difference where it is most needed.

Saturday, October 19

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

**Moscone Center,
2003 Level 2 West**

[Register Here](#)



ACS H.O.P.E. Event Schedule

**FRIDAY
OCTOBER 18TH
1 - 3:00 PM**

**Association of Academic Global Surgery (AAGS)
Meeting**

Moscone Center 210-211, Level 2, S Building

**FRIDAY
OCTOBER 18TH
3 - 5:00 PM**

**Global Surgery Student and Trainee Session -
Led by GSSA and InciSiON**

Moscone Center 210-211, Level 2, S Building

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 19TH
8:30 - 4PM**

DC02: Global Health Competencies for Surgeons

2003 Level 2 West

**SUNDAY
OCTOBER 20TH
9:45 - 11:15 AM**

**PS106: Reports of the 2024 Surgical
Volunteerism and Humanitarian Award Winners**

158 Upper Mezz South

**SUNDAY
OCTOBER 20TH
6 - 7:30 PM**

ACS H.O.P.E. Reception

SF Hilton: Plaza Room B, Lobby Level, Building 1

**MONDAY
OCTOBER 21ST
10:15 - 11 AM**

**Mercy Ships: Transcending Borders, Changing
Lives**

Innovation Theater - Moscone Exhibit Hall

**MONDAY
OCTOBER 21ST
2:30 - 4:15 PM**

PS220: Global Engagement

157 Upper Mezz South

**TUESDAY
OCTOBER 22ND
9:45 - 11:15 AM**

**PS314: Sustainable and Structuring Models of
Global Surgery Initiatives**

158 Upper Mezz South

- Exploring potential benefits of the scholarship program beyond the financial support. Committee members are working to establish a mentorship program for recipients to engage scholar winners and help recruit the next class of applicants.

These efforts hope to create a culture around the award that supports lifelong engagement in enhancing the number of women surgeons in the COSECSA region.

Inter-Hub Didactic Surgical Education

The Inter-Hub workgroup has planned a formal curriculum to meet the common needs expressed by surgeons in Lusaka, Kigali, and Hawassa, beginning in September 2024. The workgroup is recruiting lectures from experienced surgeons from the ACS, COSECSA, and elsewhere to provide an optimal educational experience.

The International Subcommittee looks forward to engaging more with the hub leadership to further assist them in meeting their educational goals.

Education

Clinical Congress 2025 Proposal Submissions

This year, ACS H.O.P.E. worked alongside the International Relations Committee to solicit proposals for Clinical Congress 2025. In total, ACS H.O.P.E. submitted 13 proposals and co-sponsored several others with topics ranging from advocating for equity in clinical exchange to using AI in global surgery and enhancing global trauma systems through military partnerships. The Education Subcommittee looks forward to the decisions made by the Clinical Congress Program Committee, which should be published this Fall.

Clinical Congress 2024

ACS H.O.P.E. is excited to feature several sessions and programs highlighting our volunteers, colleagues, and award recipients. Reserve your spot now for the post-graduate didactic course: DC02: Global Health Competencies for Surgeons! More information on the previous page. We look forward to seeing you all in San Francisco!

Partner Spotlight



Belay Mellese, MD

Dr. Belay Mellese is the Surgery Department Head at Hawassa University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. An excellent clinician and teacher, Dr. Belay has been instrumental to the outstanding growth of his institution and the success of its partnership with the ACS. Under Dr. Belay's leadership, ATLS was promulgated in Ethiopia with Hawassa being the country headquarters. Hawassa now prepares to assist in bringing ATLS to Rwanda this coming December. This is just one of Dr. Belay's many accomplishments made in his role.

Dr. Belay's commitment to research and quality improvement is evident through his leadership and wisdom in allocating resources to support additional methods of data collection, manage multiple quality improvement projects, and oversee resident research projects across his department. He consistently pushes his team to increase their standards of care and work collaboratively with ACS volunteers. Dr. Belay goes above and beyond, not only promoting surgical excellence in Hawassa, but also working with ACS H.O.P.E. staff in making sure all ACS volunteers are properly credentialed, cared for, and welcomed. Through challenges, changes, and achievements, Dr. Belay continues to steer Hawassa University toward a bright future in surgical care and education.



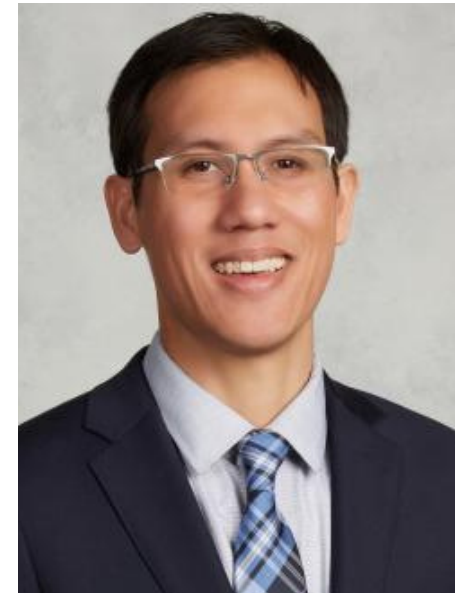
Volunteer Spotlight



Khoa Thomas Pham, MD FACS

Dr. Thomas Pham is a Clinical Associate Professor of Surgery in Abdominal Transplantation at Stanford University. In early June, Dr. Pham traveled to the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia (UTH), and worked with Dr. Aggrey Mweemba, the Zambian National Director of Dialysis, and Dr. Victor Mapulanga, Academic Surgical Department Chair and Urologist, to perform one of the few living donor transplant surgeries ever done in Zambia. These surgeries are typically outsourced to other countries. Both donor and recipient did well after surgery without perioperative complications. Successfully completing this surgery is a huge accomplishment for UTH and Zambia. In his report, Dr. Pham expressed, "Towards the end of my visit, I joined Drs. Mapulanga and Mweemba in a meeting with Dr. Lisulo Walubita, Director of Clinical Care in the Zambian Ministry of Health. There, we advocated for the Ministry of Health to support UTH in acquiring the necessary equipment for kidney transplantation."

Dr. Pham exemplifies the openness, adaptability, comradery, passion, and commitment we look for in all of our volunteers. His efforts to engage leaders at a higher level are another example of ACS H.O.P.E.'s goal to achieve sustainability and independence in our work. Plans are in motion to develop a rotation of transplant surgeons every 3-4 months to continue building UTH's capacity to independently provide transplant services.



ACS H.O.P.E.

Health Outreach Program for Equity in Global Surgery
American College of Surgeons

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suggestions, please

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