



# Alliance for Global Clinical Training

## Message from the Chair

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Alliance for Global Clinical Training (*Alliance*), a non-profit corporation linking surgical educators and residents with the Department of Surgery at the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) and Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. Our goal, in collaboration with our Tanzanian colleagues, is to improve the education and skill set of the next generation of surgeons in East Africa. Ultimately, we aim to improve access of African patients to high quality surgical care to address a problem that kills more people than HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria combined—Surgical Disease. To get a first- hand account from our *Alliance* volunteer educators, see the section “Reports from the Field” elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are entering our 6<sup>th</sup> year of operation at MUHAS during which time 13 surgical educators from the United States have provided 22 months of direct teaching in the Operating Theatres, Wards and Classrooms of MUHAS/MNH. During the same period of time 9 American and 2 Israeli residents have accompanied the volunteer educators for one month rotations exchanging knowledge with their Tanzanian peers. Together with our MUHAS/MNH partners, we have introduced a Chief Resident position to the training program, a rigorous morbidity and mortality conference, 3 formal multi-day surgery courses to better prepare the residents for their clinical duties and 13 new operations to the Department of Surgery skill set.

I hope you will enjoy learning more about the Alliance by reviewing our newsletter. If you are a surgeon who would like to become involved in our work, you can get more detailed information by checking out our website at [www.agct.info](http://www.agct.info).

If you are a person interested in improving health care in Africa, consider making a donation to the Alliance. Your donation will go directly to support the work of the volunteers and General Surgery Residents. Our goal is to have a long-term impact affecting generations to come. You can send your donation to:

**The Alliance for Global Clinical Training  
633 N. Saint Clair Street, Suite 2700  
Chicago, IL 60611**

Many thanks for your interest in the *Alliance*.  
With warm regards,

*Bill*

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## The Alliance at a Glance

- *An independent non-profit corporation linking volunteer surgical educators with their colleagues at the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania*
- *A five-year collaborative relationship*
- *Volunteers serve one-month rotations at MUHAS*
- *The educators join the MUHAS Department of Surgery and work collaboratively with MUHAS faculty, surgical residents and medical students*
- *American and Israeli residents may accompany the volunteer surgical educators for one-month rotation*
- *The goal is exchange of knowledge and improvement in surgical education and patient care, primarily by mentoring*

## Meet the Alliance Volunteers

### **Douglas Grey, MD – Alliance Treasurer**

Doug Grey, a graduate of the UC Irvine School of Medicine and the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital Residency Program, trained in Cardiovascular Surgery with the legendary Denton Cooley and served as Chief of Thoracic and Vascular Surgery at Kaiser Foundation Hospital, San Francisco for 28 years before retirement. He co-founded the Alliance and has been a volunteer faculty member at MUHAS/MNH on multiple occasions.



Doug is the proud father of three beautiful and accomplished daughters and he and Carolyn are doting grandparents of their four grandchildren. When Doug is not working for the Alliance, Operation Access and the Western Division of MedShare (all organizations which he co-founded), he enjoys watercolor painting, golfing, and woodworking.

### **Volunteer Alliance Tanzania Coordinator and MUHAS Senior Surgeon, Dr. Ali Mwanga**



Ali is a 2004 graduate of MUHAS who completed his training in surgery at MUHAS in 2010 and an MS (Fellowship) in Surgical Endoscopy and Hepatology. He has been an important partner with the Alliance since its inception in 2012 and coordinates all activities of Alliance Faculty and Residents at MUHAS/MNH under the direction of Department Chair Dr. Larry Akoko.

Ali is the leader of the Surgical Gastrointestinal Unit who enjoys the respect and affection of his residents and fellows. He has been instrumental in introducing laparoscopic surgery to MUHAS/MNH and is a prominent-figure in educating the next generation of Tanzanian surgeons.

Ali and his wife Salma Abdallah Wibonela are the proud parents of two daughters, Salha and Samra, and their son, Ajmal. Ali has written: *"There has been tremendous improvement in the knowledge and skill sets at Muhimbili and the country as a whole. Personally, I am far better in the skill sets as a result of the training/mentorship from the Alliance Faculty trainer. My sincere request to the Alliance is to continue with the training they are offering as we are still in great need."*

### Reports from the Field

"There were also a lot of interesting cases in clinic this week including patients with inflammatory carcinoma of the breast, carcinoma of the head of the pancreas (with a Courvoisier gallbladder), Graves Disease, gastric cancer. We are both making an educational contribution and learning a lot from our Tanzanian colleagues and patients." – **Eveline Shue UCSF Resident, October 2012**

"After making rounds Saturday morning (we went) to Kipepeo Beach south of the city. We walked onto a ferry for 12 cents (200 Tanzania shillings) There was a contortionist on board the ferry for entertainment. We three then wedged ourselves into a motorized rickshaw called a Tuk-tuks or Bajaj. The beach access was over a very bumpy road so Dr. Schecter told us to "hang onto your kidneys". But once we reached Kipepeo Beach it was well worth it - warm Indian Ocean and soft trade winds. One could swim in these waters for hours. The beach was wide & long with crystal white sand and easy to jog - life is good.... One of the residents is from a mud hut (tukul) near Mt Kilimanjaro. His father has 5 wives and our resident surgeon has 29 siblings. He is the only family member with any kind of education. He is already a fine technical surgeon and next July he will return home." – **Mac Cooke OHSU Resident, November 2013**

"The opportunities to learn are tremendous at MUHAS. During morning report each day, they really emphasize the role of physical diagnosis and good history for understanding the patients' situation i.e. general appearance, heart rate, chest auscultation, a careful abdominal exam, post-op progression or regression, overnight symptoms and their sequence. The week at MUHAS by the numbers: 1.5 nights on call. – Including 3 laparotomies. Scrubbed on 9 major cases – laparotomies, ventral hernia repair, amputation .... It was an incredible growth

and learning experience." – **Rebecca Maine UCSF Resident, March 2014**

"Muhimbili National Hospital is the final option for many patients - their last chance. The hernias, gallbladders and most trauma patients are often done elsewhere. The wards are full of patients with advanced breast, anal, skin, liver (hepatoma), pancreas and esophageal cancers. There are no "easy" operations here...Ward rounds today with the MUHAS Professor Emeritus Leonard Lema. One of only two surgeons in Tanzania honored by the American College of Surgeons as a "Traveling Fellow". Rounds began at 0730 and ended at 1400 (2PM). He saw 62 patients. Dr. Lema was teaching the whole time. His mastery of the details of physical examinations and his patience was a joy to watch. Dr. Lema trained in USA and England but was born 5 minutes from this national hospital." – **Jim Peck OHSU Adjunct Professor, November 2014)**

"It is difficult to convey the sense of privilege, challenge, the elation, frustration and occasional profound disappointment that are part and parcel of surgical practice in Tanzania. I take particular pride in the dedication and skill of our Tanzanian colleagues who assure me that the efforts of the Alliance volunteers over the past 5 years have not only changed the skill set but also the attitude and dedication of the MUHAS surgeons." – **Bill Schecter UCSF Professor Emeritus, December 2016**

"My personal experience was unique, maturing and very enriching. The ability to remedy and rescue is enormous and our presence there brought about dramatic change. I was exposed to previously unfamiliar diseases and surgical procedures and experienced work in a resource constrained environment where death and disease are unremarkable routine events. I have ambivalent feelings. On the one hand, frustration and great sadness for the low value of human life, the severity of disease and the great suffering that would be easily preventable in another setting. On the other hand, great satisfaction for the ability to help and to on occasion completely change the prognosis of the patient and to teach the local caregivers a skill set that will serve them well for decades to come. I learned from the Tanzanians as much as I taught and there is no doubt that I will return." – **Ron Pery, Surgery Resident, Sheba Medical Center, Israel**  
[translated from Hebrew by Bill Schecter]



### **Accomplishments of the Alliance**

- Over 400 directly supervised complex teaching cases
- 22 months of direct teaching in the OR and classroom
- Recruitment of 13 surgical educators and 11 accompanying surgical residents

### **Participating Surgical Departments:**

- o University of California, San Francisco
- o University of California, San Francisco/East Bay
- o University of California, Davis
- o University of California, Los Angeles
- o Oregon Health Sciences University
- o Meir Medical Center, Israel
- o Sheba Medical Center, Israel

- Introduction of 13 new procedures to the MUHAS/MNH Department of

Surgery now being done independently and taught by MUHAS/MNH surgeons

- Introduction of 3 new formal surgery courses now being taught to MUHAS students and residents by MUHAS/MNH surgeons
- Articles on our work have been published in JAMA Surgery and Annals of Global Health
- Gained the trust and respect of Tanzanian faculty and residents
- Mentored the first Laparoscopic advanced surgical procedures

### **Donate to the Alliance**

The Alliance has accomplished much since the beginning in 2012 but can do so much more. We have provided 13 educators who have donated 22 months of service to Muhimbili Hospital. **This program has been entirely self-funded up to now. Volunteers pay all of their expenses, including airfare, lodging meals and necessities such as visa for travel, Malaria prophylaxis medications, vaccinations, etc.** In order to continue as well as expand the program, we need your help!

We are raising money for three programs:

- Administrative support for care coordination
- Volunteer support
- Volunteer recruitment

Please consider a modest donation to the Alliance to continue to improve health care in Africa! We thank you!

**Donate to the Alliance**

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