

MISSION MESSAGES

From the GC Loma Linda Office



WELCOME

DMA FEATURE

RECENT EVENTS & NEWS

WELCOME

As we wrap-up another graduation season, we have many missionary milestones to celebrate. This year we have five medical school DMA graduates: **Minha Cha**, **Jade Deschamps Stutzman**, **Lance Hofer-Draper**, **Benjamin Rivera**, and **David Skau**. As they continue their training in their individual residency programs, we send our well-wishes and prayers. You'll find their Match Day photos and specialties below.



Minha Cha

Internal Medicine, LLUMC



Jade Deschamps Stutzman:

Preventive Medicine, LLUMC



Lance Hofer-Draper

Family Medicine, Ascension St. John's Hospital, Oklahoma



Benjamin Rivera

Internal Medicine, Kettering



David Skau

Family Medicine, Kettering

WELCOME

This spring I had the opportunity to visit some of our current DMA missionaries stationed in West Africa. Drs. Jason and Grace Kim have sparked a new partnership with Glei Adventist Hospital in French-speaking Togo when they started their service earlier this year. We look forward to expanding ophthalmology and dental service mission opportunities with them. You can learn more about their service in the DMA feature.

I also was able to visit Dr. James and Rachel Fernando at AHS Waterloo Hospital in Sierra Leone. It's wonderful to see their advocacy for their staff's continuing education and training. Having a few years to settle-in and with the development of a new leadership team, there are strategic and ambitious projects ahead to continue advancing the hospital's services.



Angeli visiting Dr. James and Rachel Fernando, accompanied by their son

And not to forget our other mission programs, we have two Global Service Awardees beginning their service at Kendu Adventist Hospital in Kenya this month. Angie Manuel is a LLU School of Nursing graduate with emergency department experience. Ismari Altamirano is a LLU School of Allied Health graduate from the occupational therapy program. While no strangers to international travel or mission service, their specialties will be tested as KAH moves forward with their new initiatives.



GSAAs Angie Manuel and Ismari Altamirano

This year we also acknowledge and appreciate the years of service for some of our DMA families finishing their service abroad. Dr. Wilson and Danika Thomas are in the process of ending their service at Malamulo Adventist Hospital and the Malamulo Adventist International School in Malawi. We are grateful for their leadership on that campus.

It's difficult to summarize the impact that Dr. James and Sarah Appel have had on our mission community. Their 20 years of service have spanned revitalizing and starting hospitals in Chad, providing medical coverage during the Ebola outbreak in Liberia, and helping to inspire the next generation of missionaries during our first Mission Boot Camp in Haiti. We sincerely wish them the best on this next chapter.

WELCOME

This month we will hold the second Mission Boot Camp at La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital in Belize. Dr. Jeff Cho has organized a program to enrich the mind, body, and spirit while exploring what long-term clinical mission service can look like and strive to be. We look forward to using this opportunity for reflection, to explore the depths of interpersonal connections, and for the strengthening of faith and the commitment to following each of our callings.

We have deep gratitude for how each of you have been involved in LLUH's mission service to the world. The programs are busy and growing, and yet there is still a world of need. May each of our talents and trained skills continue to open doors to bring health and healing to the communities we serve as we strive to "Make Man Whole."

~Angeli



CURRENT DMAs & GSAs:

Visit Us & Share Your Mission Story

[Accommodations in Loma Linda provided]

What is Provided:

- Two weeks of accommodations on or close to campus

In Exchange For:

- Public Relations activity - video recording, etc. or
- Event Speaker (MIG vespers, Oak Glen Fellowship, etc.)

Contact the GC Loma Linda Office to coordinate at least one month before visit by calling 909-558-7747 or email gc@llu.edu

Submit a Prayer Request:
<https://ghi.llu.edu/prayer>



VISION AND HOPE: A JOURNEY OF HEALING AND FAITH IN TOGO

By Drs. Jason and Grace Kim

Glei Adventist Eye Hospital, Togo

When I started my cornea fellowship, my wife and I began to ask God to send us where He could use us best as a missionary ophthalmologist and dentist. When we initially heard the suggestion of going to Togo, we both had to Google it because neither of us had heard of this country. Togo is a small, French-speaking country sandwiched between Ghana and Benin in West Africa. The only Adventist hospital in the country is Centre Hospitalier Adventiste d'Ophthalmologie de Gléi (CHAO) aka Gléi Adventist Eye Hospital. This hospital is not only an eye hospital but also houses a dental clinic. When we visited in February 2023, we felt God wanted us to come to the village of Gléi to work. The fact that it had both an ophthalmology and dental clinic seemed perfect for us. We moved here exactly one year later in February 2024.

I see multiple patients a day who have been blind for years due to severe cataracts in both eyes. Many of these patients are not even 50 years old but have extremely advanced cataracts. In comparison, it is rare to see such advanced cataracts at all in developed countries, let alone before the age of 70. Fortunately, cataracts are a reversible form of blindness and being able to perform surgery to restore their vision is a wonderful experience. Additionally, I have many young patients with advanced glaucoma. Unfortunately, the damage done by glaucoma is usually irreversible, so it is ideal to see these patients before the damage is too severe.

DMA FEATURE

One patient I saw was a young mother of a 2-year-old boy. Her vision had already decreased to only being able to count the number of fingers held up by our nurse. She had advanced glaucoma and significant cataracts in both eyes. The glaucoma was too advanced in her left eye for any hope of visual recovery, but I told her we should try for her right eye. I performed both cataract surgery and glaucoma surgery (trabeculectomy) for her, and by the grace of God, her eye pressure came down significantly and her vision was restored to a level where she would be legal to drive if she lived in America. In addition to that, this was the first glaucoma surgery to be done at CHAO in over 10 years. This patient who could barely get around by herself with a baby on her back can now recognize me and our hospital staff at her post-op visits. Though patients like these are a blessing to treat, it breaks my heart to have those who present to clinic too late or cannot afford surgery.

I find myself telling patients, “ Even in America, there is nothing that can be done for your eyes”. Patients present with terrible trauma and eye infections that occurred/began weeks and even months ago. By the time they come to CHAO, it ’ s too late or they don ’ t have the money to be treated. I had one 18-year-old boy who was hit in the eye by a tree branch five months ago. When he showed up at CHAO, it was his first visit to any healthcare provider since the accident. He had a part of his iris poking out through the cornea where the branch had cut. Not only that, but he was actively leaking intraocular fluid through this corneal perforation. I told him and his mother that he needed surgery as soon as possible to at least try to close the leaking area of the eye. The patient never came back, most likely due to not having money for surgery.

Most surgeries here cost less than \$150. This may not sound like much, but it does amount to a hefty sum when many make less than \$5 a day. After this case, we began to pray for money to start a fund for patients who cannot afford surgery. God answered our prayers by having one of our friends generously donate money to begin this fund. I was able to utilize the fund soon after to help another 18-year-old patient. He had been injured with a nail to the eye a week prior, and it had caused a leaking perforation in his eye. After his consultation, his mother told us that they would have to go home and take a few days to try to gather the money for surgery. Thanks to the newly created fund, I was able to operate on him that same day. Praise God that his vision was already improving one day after surgery!

DMA FEATURE

Down the hall, Grace works in a small dental clinic to provide general dentistry services to the community. Most, if not all, patients come in only when there is a problem, and she commonly sees acute infections and injuries from trauma. It has been an adjustment from the States where she was used to treatment plans that were followed and appointments that were kept. Dentistry in Togo is familiar in some ways, but it is a little foreign to have cleanings that are combined with debridement, prophylaxis, and a scaling. For most patients, this is their first time seeing a dentist. In the future, Grace hopes to expand the dental clinic and be able to offer more advanced treatments for the patients. However, the priority now is to raise dental health awareness in the community of Gléi and surrounding areas. She hopes to spread awareness through dental seminars in local grade schools and community centers. Much like the ophthalmology department, the dental clinic is lacking in resources and materials, however Grace is hopeful in the potential of the clinic and the services it can provide to the community.

When I look around Togo, the needs are infinite, and the resources are extremely limited. It can be discouraging to see such disparities in wealth and resources compared to developed countries, but it is during these thoughts that I find myself most drawn to God as I am reminded of how little we as humans can do alone. Every morning, we start the day with a staff worship. It has been encouraging to start the day off together in worship and prayer. Though there is a lot of equipment and funding that we need, we come together as a family to praise God for the way He has led us thus far. All of us at CHAO hope to glorify God so that patients can come here and feel God's love.

There are many examples in the Bible where Jesus pairs together spiritual and physical healing. It is Christ's example we look to emulate through our work here. CHAO may be a small hospital in a small village in a small country, but we thank God for being a big and powerful God. We pray that our time here is not spent just maintaining the status quo, but elevating the standard of care both surgically and clinically so that God may continue to use CHAO to further spread the good news of Christ's love for all. We pray that God advance this hospital in a way where others can witness and give all the credit to Him. As Jesus said in Luke 18:27, "The things which are impossible with man are possible with God."



NEWS

STARTING SERVICE:

Laurel Guthrie
Bere Adventist Hospital, Chad

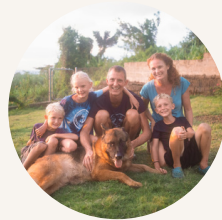


Jason & Grace Kim,
Glei Adventist Hospital, Togo



ENDING SERVICE:

James Appel
SDA Cooper Hospital, Liberia



Wilson Thomas
Malamulo Adventist Hospital, Malawi



BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT:

Hailey Kim
Born to Jason & Grace Kim



RECENT EVENTS:

LLUH Homecoming: DMA & GSA Reception
March 1, 2024. Featured a SDA Guam Clinic update from Dr. Jonathon Thorp



LLUSM Match Day: March 15, 2024



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Global Healthcare Leadership Academy (formerly the Global Healthcare Conference): Regional event in Blantyre.

August 6-10, 2024



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

Global Health Institute

909-558-7747 or email ghi.llu.edu/gc