

The ASA-GHO Resident International Anesthesia Scholarship in Ethiopia

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A Resident International Anesthesia Scholarship has been established at the Cure Hospital, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

American anesthesiology residents increasingly seek to understand, and wish to practice, anesthesiology in less resource-intensive environments outside the borders of the United States.

McCunn et al.¹ performed a survey of U.S. anesthesiology residents and noted that 91 percent of those surveyed indicated an interest in global health outreach despite the fact that fewer than half had participated in a global health outreach medical mission. More recently, another survey demonstrated that at least 47 percent of first-year residents entering into an anesthesiology residency this past year plan on incorporating global health work into their practice following residency (Dr. Faye Evans, personal communication).

In order to respond to this trend, the Committee on Global Humanitarian Outreach (GHO) (April 2014 meeting) discussed approaches that would facilitate resident rotations in developing countries. The obstacles for resident participation include identifying suitable sites and countries as well as ensuring that ABA and ACGME credit will be granted through appropriate on-site supervision of these rotations.

Dr. Berend Mets had traveled to Ethiopia, which at one time had been a site for Society for Education in Anesthesia-Health Volunteers Overseas (SEA-HVO) fellowship recipients. The location was unfortunately discontinued because of the inability to ensure appropriate faculty oversight. Dr. Elizabeth Drum had also traveled to Ethiopia (10 times) with Healing the Children, a U.S.-based NGO. Over the intervening years, Dr. Drum has developed relationships with local surgeons and hospitals, and especially with the Cure

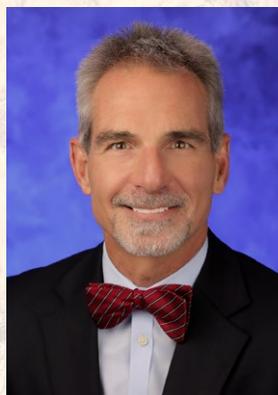


Naod and Abulu (master's in nursing anesthesia students from Addis Ababa University), Dr. Shah and a family medicine resident at Cure Hospital, Ethiopia.

Hospital in Addis Ababa, one of the facilities supported by Cure International, based in Pennsylvania. Dr. Mary Bernard, a U.S. board-certified anesthesiologist, serves as the Cure Hospital anesthesiologist-in-chief as well as its medical director. In this capacity, Dr. Bernard oversees the medical and surgical care at Cure Hospital and also participates in educational programs for Ethiopian anesthesia residents and master's in nursing anesthesia students under the auspices of Addis Ababa University. While Cure Ethiopia does have many visiting teams during the year, Dr. Bernard and the anesthesiologists on staff at Cure provide the bulk of the education and clinical care.



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Cure Hospital, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

It seemed like a perfect opportunity! The GHO committee could help facilitate getting U.S. anesthesia residents to spend a month at Cure, and Cure and Dr. Bernard could provide the location for visiting residents and also ensure appropriate supervision of anesthesia trainees.

The GHO committee proposed to the ASA Board of Directors that the society support a Resident International Anesthesia Scholarship program (modeled on the SEA-HVO fellowship program) to send U.S. anesthesiology residents to Ethiopia for a month's rotation. Although the timeline was short, the proposal was sent to the board and ultimately voted on and approved at the ASA 2014 annual meeting. Testimony from GHO committee members and other interested ASA members was crucial for the acceptance of the proposal. ASA approved funding for six residents to start 2015-16. Drs. Mets and Drum each donated prize award money they had received from the SEA and **Medicalmissions.org** International, respectively, toward supporting a further two residents for this scholarship.

Announcements for competitive application were placed in the ASA NEWSLETTER, on the ASA website and in the Society of Academic Anesthesiology Associations monthly newsletters. Interested residents were encouraged to apply for the program. Requirements included being at least a CA-2 resident at the time of the rotation as well as providing a resume, a letter of recommendation from the resident's program director and a personal statement. The GHO committee established a subcommittee to review and score the applications. More than 55 applications were received. An evaluation tool was developed, applications scored and the winners ranked. A collaborative effort was made with the SEA-HVO fellowship program so that residents who had applied to both programs were not awarded two scholarships.

We now have our first class of eight scholarship winners scheduled to spend a rotation in Ethiopia during the 2015-16 academic year!

The recipients of the 2015-16 Resident International Anesthesia Scholarships are:

Rachel Freschet, M.D.	Virginia Mason Medical Center
Samrawit Goshu, M.D.	Yale New Haven Hospital
Micah Hatch, M.D.	University of Tennessee
Meerim Cindy Kim, M.D.	Massachusetts General Hospital
Christina Stachur, M.D., M.P.H.	Stanford University
Anna Swenson-Schalkwyk, M.D.	Stanford University
Hermela Tezera, M.D.	Indiana University
Chelsea Willie, M.D.	University of North Carolina

In order to "field test" the program, before rotations begin, Drs. Mets and Drum have sent and supervised several residents from Penn State and Temple University on rotations to Cure. These residents have uniformly identified this as a highly valuable rotation.

Dr. Manish Shah, from Penn State Hershey, said, "Rotating in Ethiopia and being able to take care of impoverished patients was such a humbling and rewarding experience. Teaching the (Ethiopian) anesthesia students and learning to practice anesthesia with limited resources was a unique experience. Dr. Mary Bernard's dedication to these children inspired me to continue to do medical missions in my career."

Dr. Sally Baker from Penn State Hershey said, "Having had the opportunity to travel to Ethiopia to practice anesthesia will be an experience I will remember for the rest of my life. It was such an honor to work with the dedicated physicians and nurses of CURE International to treat some of the best patients I've ever had. I learned as much as I taught, and truly believe I'm a better physician as a result of my time there."



Sally Baker, M.D.

These testimonials from two senior residents from Penn State Hershey recognize the wonderful educational opportunity (including using halothane!) that is afforded by this experience. We look forward to reporting on the experiences of our current Resident International Anesthesia Scholarship recipients and recognize the support of ASA in providing for the training of our residents abroad.

References:

1. McCunn M, Speck RM, Chung I, Atkins JA, Raiten JM, Fleisher LA. Global health outreach during anesthesiology residency in the United States: a survey of interest, barriers to participation, and proposed solutions. *J Clin Anesth.* 2012;24(1);38-43.