Surgery has long been a neglected area of global health. The global burden of surgical disease is estimated at 15 percent of the total worldwide disease burden. Although diseases treatable by surgery remain a ranking killer of the world’s poor, public attention and public health dollars most often target infectious diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria. Only recently has surgery been accepted as an equal partner in the fight against global health care inequities. (Excerpted from Harvard Program in Global Surgery)

The newsletter highlights the active role of the MGH Department of Surgery in global surgery (Emergency and Essential Surgery initiatives). The Department of Surgery provides opportunities for residents, surgical staff and alumni to share their expertise with countries in need through research, education and surgical training. International electives for MGH surgical residents were approved for ACGME credit in October 2014.
The MGH Department of Surgery, along with other clinical departments at MGH and MEEI, has developed a collaboration with the Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) Mbarara, Uganda. MUST was founded in 1989 in response to the increasing demand for health professionals in Uganda and is affiliated with Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital (MRRH), a public, government-funded hospital that serves as the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine (MUST). One of the goals of the MGH Department of Surgery is to send clinicians in multi-disciplinary specialties (short or long term rotations) to MUST to improve clinical services and provide training opportunities. MGH’s collaboration with Harvard Program in Global Health has provided surgical residents with unique opportunities for research initiatives. The following MGH surgical residents and faculty participated in programs at MUST in 2015.

**Dr. Tiffany Chao – PGY5**

Tiffany Chao has spearheaded efforts to integrate broader global health training into the MGH General Surgery residency, including the initiation of a “Global Surgery Pathway” for residents. In 2015, Tiffany traveled to MUST for an ACGME-approved international elective, focusing on clinical and research activities. She was supervised on-site by MGH faculty Dr. Henning Gaissert and Dr. David Lawlor.

**Dr. Geoffrey Anderson – PGY4**

In March 2015, Dr. Geoffrey Anderson, accompanied by Dr. Susan Briggs, traveled to Mbarara as part of the ongoing effort by the Department of Surgery at MGH to partner with the surgeons at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) to improve their educational and clinical capacities in trauma, emergency and critical care surgery. Dr. Briggs and Dr. Anderson conducted an assessment of MUST’s trauma system and several of their educational activities for surgical residents and staff.

Dr. Briggs and Dr. Anderson, assisted by Dr. Danielle DePeralta, surgical resident on the ACGME-approved clinical rotation at MUST, taught the Essential Surgical Skills Course to Ugandan senior medical students. This course is of great importance in Uganda as the students will be assigned to District Hospitals one year after completing an internship. They are expected to
perform minor and major operations. The MGH Department of Surgery has committed to support this course and has provided simulation modules, surgical instruments and a new manual based on the WHO publication “Surgical Care at the District Hospital”. Dr. Anderson and Dr. Deepika Nehra, a Graduate Assistant in the MGH Department of Surgery, taught the second yearly course in November, 2015.

Plans are being developed for the establishment of an operative trauma course at MUST, based on the principles of the American College of Surgeons courses given to MGH surgical residents. Initial didactic lectures were given to surgical residents and staff by Dr. Briggs while at MUST and plans for a future cadaver course are being developed by the MGH Department of Surgery. Dr. Anderson continues his involvement in Mbarara, Uganda as the Paul Farmer Global Surgery Research Fellow for the year 2015-2016.

**Dr. Danielle DePeralta – PGY4**

Dr. Danielle DePeralta participated in the ACGMC approved rotation at MUST in 2015. She had an extraordinary operative rotation, including extensive pediatric experience. She assisted in teaching the Essential Surgery Course to 5th year medical students.

![Image of Dr. Danielle DePeralta]
**Dr. Johanna Riesel – PGY4**

Dr. Johanna Riesel, general surgery resident and Paul Farmer Global Surgery Research Fellow, returned to Mbarara in March to continue work on several projects. She worked on an electronic quality assurance database for the Department of Surgery at MUST. Dr. Riesel collaborated with her Ugandan partners and a student from Harvard Medical School (Charles Liu, a Paul Farmer Research Associate) to develop a study to generate a concise ICD coding list for all surgical procedures performed at Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital (MRRH). Johanna also worked on a project focusing on improving surgical outcomes for patients with Typhoid intestinal perforations. Dr. Reisel has been accepted into the Harvard Plastic Surgery Program and will continue her global surgery efforts.

**Dr. Deepika Nehra**

Dr. Nehra completed her MGH residency in 2014 and a Trauma Fellowship (2014-15) at Harborview Medical Hospital, Seattle, Washington. She has been appointed as a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Surgery to oversee MGH global surgery initiatives at Mbarara for the year 2015-2016.
**MGH – MUST SURGICAL STAFF**

Dr. Jim Cusack – Oncology Surgery

Dr. Susan Briggs – Trauma Surgery

Dr. David Lawlor – Pediatric Surgery

Dr. Henning Gaissert – Thoracic Surgery

Dr. Deepika Nehra – General Surgery

**RWANDA**

![Rwanda flag](image)

**Dr. Michael Kwon – PGY5**

In 2015, Dr. Michael Kwon, General Surgery Resident, travelled to Rwanda as part of Team Heart. Team Heart is a Boston based non-profit medical organization focused on bringing sustainable cardiac care to Rwanda and East Africa. The mission has three primary pillars: Prevention, Intervention and Education.
**SOUTH AFRICA**

*Dr. Brian George – PGY5*

Dr. Brian George, General Surgery Resident, spent a month at Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH) in Cape Town, South Africa as part of an elective rotation in trauma. GSH is the primary trauma center for Cape Town and treats a high volume of penetrating trauma victims. Brian’s experience was incredibly rewarding on multiple levels. Not only was this his first time practicing medicine outside the US, but he also had a wide range of operative experiences. Dr. George is currently completing a trauma fellowship at Harborview Medical Center, Seattle, Washington (2015-2016).

A previous MGH trauma fellow, Dr. David Fink, also completed an international trauma rotation in South Africa at the Chris Hani Baragwaneth Hospital in Johannesburg.

**AFFILIATED MGH GLOBAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS**

**INTERNATIONAL TRAUMA AND DISASTER INSTITUTE (ITDI) – DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY**

**Mission:** A center of excellence for trauma and disaster preparedness and response under the direction of Dr. Susan Briggs and the MGH surgical faculty, ITDI has developed multidisciplinary training programs and manuals designed to train disaster medical responders in the basics of disaster medical care. The First Edition of the Advanced Disaster Medical Response (ADMR) manual is available in eight languages. The Second Edition was published in 2013 and is currently under publication in Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese.

Over the past years, MGH faculty and International affiliated faculty have participated in train-the-trainer courses in China, Hong Kong, Macau, Columbia, Panama, Malaysia, Brazil,
Paraguay, Bolivia, Trinidad and the USA. The Second Edition of the ADMR manual was published in December, 2013 under the auspices of the MGH Department of Surgery and the Harvard Medical School Program in Global Surgery and Social Medicine.

**MGH CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH**
http://massgeneralcenterforglobalhealth.org/

**Mission:** To improve the health of the most vulnerable in our global community by leveraging Mass General’s 200-year legacy of innovation in medical care, education, and scientific discovery.

**PARTNERS HEALTHCARE INTERNATIONAL® (PHI)**
http://www.partners.org/international/About/Default.aspx

**Mission:** To transform health care globally by developing programs with a global network of highly regarded institutions committed to excellence in medical care, education and research.
HARVARD DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL MEDICINE
http://ghsm.hms.harvard.edu/

Mission: The Department of Global Health and Social Medicine applies social science and humanities research to constantly improve the practice of medicine, the delivery of treatment, and the development of health care policies locally and worldwide. A major effort is the Global Health Delivery program and developing the science of implementation. As of 2008, the Department is the central structure to help organize global health activities, especially medical education experiences, at Harvard Medical School. A number of affiliated programs, including the Program in Global Surgery and Social Change, are part of the comprehensive center. Affiliated MGH faculty for the Program in Global Surgery include Drs. Susan Briggs, Robert Sheridan, Peter Fagenholz, David Lawlor and James Cusack.

From the Editors Dr. Susan Briggs & Dr. James Cusack: Please send information on your global surgery initiatives to the editors for future newsletters.