



MacGLObAS

McMaster Global Health Office
Obstetrics & Gynecology | Anesthesia | Surgery

2019 Annual Report



Welcome!

Welcome to **MacGLObAS**, we invite you to join us in looking back at this year's successes and forward to the activities planned for 2020!

Formed in the summer of 2018, **MacGLObAS** is a collaboration between the **Global Health Office** and Departments of **Obstetrics & Gynecology**, **Anesthesia**, and **Surgery**. It aims to bring together faculty and residents to promote our activities and partnerships, recognize and inspire volunteer service by faculty and trainees, develop educational resources for those interested in global surgical care, and generate innovative interdisciplinary research.

Dr. Brian Cameron
Director, MacGLObAS

Successes so far:

- **March:** Two presentations at the CUGH International Global Health Conference in Chicago
- **May:** MacGLObAS Joint Rounds, Dinner & Reception co-hosted with St. Joseph's IOP; over 100 in total attendance
- **October:** Seminar with over 40 attendees.
- **International Fellows & Guests hosted:** **Dr. Ronald Kabuye** (IOP Thoracic Surgery Fellow—Uganda), **Dr. Carlos Martin** (IOP Vascular Surgery fellow—Guyana), **Dr. Eve Nakembe** (Speaker—Uganda), **Dr. Smolana Swan** (IOP Anesthesia Resident—Guyana), **Dr. Marisa Seepersaud** (Pediatric Surgery Observer—Guyana)
- **Growing engagement** with over 100 faculty, residents, and students engaged in MacGLObAS activities and social media presence

Recap: 2019 MacGLObAS Rounds & Reception (May 26-27, 2019)

At this year's **MacGLObAS Joint Department Chair Rounds** we were honoured to host **Dr. Eve Nakembe**, consultant Obstetrician and Global Health advocate from Uganda (right image). The Rounds were over 60 people in attendance and many more joining by teleconference. Eve's talk "Harnessing Limited Resources with Big Impact". The following day MacGLObAS co-hosted a Dinner & Reception at the McMaster University Club with faculty from the departments, representatives from St. Joseph's International Outreach Program (IOP), and international scholars training at McMaster through IOP. At this event, Eve spoke at this event as a past fellow of the IOP program, discussing the impact that the training had on her personally, professionally, and on the people she cares for in Uganda. The evening also heard from a number of current and former members of [St. Joseph's International Outreach Program](#), including Canadian, Guyanese, and Ugandan faculty and residents who have contributed and benefited from the program.

To watch Dr. Eve's Nakabembe's presentation at the Rounds, visit: <http://bit.ly/2FqBnI9>

To support the work of **St. Joseph's International Outreach Program**, visit: <http://bit.ly/2sFMgmr>



Recap: 2019 MacGIObAS Fall Seminar “Global Surgery in Context”

The second annual **MacGIObAS Seminar “Global Surgery in Context”** took place on Saturday October 26 at St. Joseph’s hospital, with over 40 participants. The first presenter, **Dr. Stephen Foster**, described his experience developing and training clinicians in Angola over the past thirty years. Following his presentation, **Dr. Mark Osmond**, chaired a panel discussion, with specific case examples on how to promote collaboration in post-graduate training. Panelists included (right image; right to left): **Dr. Carlos Martin**, **Dr. Stephen Foster**, **Dr. Caitlin VanDeCappelle**, and **Dr. Mark Osmond**. The next presenter, **Dr. Amy Montour** (bottom image), discussed how clinicians could provide culturally sensitive care for indigenous people. As a member of a First Nation community and trained physician she challenged attendees to help bring change by empowering



its indigenous communities. The afternoon’s final presenter, **Dr. Nicholas Comninellis** of [INMED](#) discussed challenges that clinicians face working in the global surgical context. The last two presenters were brought together for a final discussion panel on Sustainable Global Surgical Practice, with case-studies presented by **Dr. Brian Cameron** to the three panelists: **Dr. Nicholas Comninellis**, **Dr. Amy Montour**, and **Dr. Ronald Kabuye**. The event concluded with a presentation of the “**Every Day Hero**” award to Dr. Stephen Foster on behalf of the Department of Surgery. Read the full story on our [website](#). Watch the seminar recording at: <http://bit.ly/37yQXgv> Find out more about [INMED](#), visit: <https://www.inmed.us/>

Editorial: What is Global Surgery? Have we considered GLocal Surgery?

A recent article in the American Journal of Surgery¹ raises an important question regarding the definition and our perception of what is Global Surgery. In their qualitative study, one hundred health professionals were interviewed with only 61% correctly defining Global Surgery; those who were able to define the term, described it was ‘working internationally’ or ‘working in other countries with limited resources’. However, if we reflect on the 2014 Lancet Commission on Global Surgery’s definition² “an area of study, research, practice, and advocacy, that seeks to improve health outcomes and achieve health equity for all people who need surgical and anesthesia care, with a special emphasis on underserved populations and populations in crisis”, there are arguably communities within our own borders which would relate to this definition. As examples, the unmet surgical needs of impoverished citizens, new immigrant and refugee populations, minorities, and remote and rural communities, could all fit this definition of Global Surgery. More over, Canada’s Indigenous Peoples with over 1.6 Million people face many of the unmet health and surgical needs faced by international partners of traditional Global Surgery initiatives. What is encouraging is that surgeons and institutions have begun to expand their perspective of what is Global Surgery, such as the University of Toronto Department of Surgery’s 2019 Global Surgery Symposium with talks on gun violence in Canada, and the upcoming 2020 Bethune Roundtable’s conference theme of “Indigenous Peoples in Global Surgery”.

Looking forward, this is a challenge to reflect on these collective experiences, research, and innovations in Global Surgery to serve populations within our own borders, and continuing the conversation of GLocal Surgery.

- David Oldenburger RN, MSc

Global Health Coordinator

¹Abraham, M. N., Abraham, P. J., Chen, H., & Hendershot, K. M. (2019). What is global surgery? Identifying misconceptions among health professionals. The American Journal of Surgery.

²Dare, A. J., Grimes, C. E., Gillies, R., Greenberg, S. L., Hagander, L., Meara, J. G., & Leather, A. J. (2014). Global surgery: defining an emerging global health field. The Lancet, 384(9961), 2245-2247.

Stories in Global Surgery

Post-Graduate Medical Graduations in Guyana

November 3, 2019 was a big day in the postgraduate medical education calendar in Guyana. It was graduation day for 40 individuals from 11 programs. The Institute for Health Science Education, the postgraduate training department of the Georgetown Public Hospital, affiliated with the University of Guyana, hosted a celebration for graduates, their families, friends, classmates and local and visiting faculty. It was a party! One of the anesthesia graduates, Dr. Dorette Husbands-Anderson, spent 4 months of her residency training at McMaster, sponsored by the International Outreach Program of the St. Joseph's Health System. I got to know her well during that time and we have kept in contact since. It was so rewarding to be able to celebrate with her. So far, three anesthesiologists have graduated from the MMed program and we look forward to doubling that number this coming year. These graduates represent the first anesthesiologists ever to be trained in Guyana.



The day after the graduation I attended the 12th annual Guyana Medical Scientific Research Conference. Medical practitioners from a variety of specialties presented their research in combination of poster presentations, keynote addresses and small group sessions.

The other highlight of my brief trip was meeting with the Minister of Public Health, the Honourable Volda Lawrence. The bulk of Guyana's population is concentrated in metropolitan areas. The level of health service delivery in those areas is far better than in the rural areas. Though there are district and regional hospitals that service these outlying areas, there is a severe deficit of qualified healthcare practitioners. During our meeting with the Minister, we emphasized the need for appropriately trained anesthesia and surgical providers that can deliver care for the 'bellwether' procedures. McMaster faculty have been playing a pivotal role in supporting postgraduate medical education in Guyana and we will continue to do so.



Images: Top Right (left to right): Dr. Harvey, Dr. Hamstra, Dr. Bibi Mohammed, Dr Dorette Husbands, Dr. Eric Nelson (anesthesiologist with ASA Global humanitarian outreach) and Dr. Tiffany Fiedtkou - anesthesia resident (fourth year); bottom Left Image: Dr. Hamstra teaching an Erector Spinae Plane block in Guyana

- Joel Hamstra MD FRCPC, Department of Anesthesia

The Healing of Hands - Guatemala 2019

As a plastic surgeon, I am fortunate. As a Canadian, I am privileged. As a parent, I am blessed.

For all of these gifts, I am thankful. Over 12 days in October that included Thanksgiving weekend, my 14 year-old daughter and I along with 4 other Canadians participated in a surgical and outreach mission to Guatemala.

I have been involved with Guatemala Healing Hands Foundation (www.guatemalahands.org) for a decade with yearly missions to Guatemala City. The group consists of 50 hand therapists, nurses, surgeons and support staff who deliver care to children and teenagers with congenital and traumatic injuries to the upper extremity. The organization was founded by Lynn Bassini, a Guatemalan-born and Brooklyn-based Hand Therapist. With so many impoverished Guatemalans who rely on manual labour to earn a living, Lynn recognized the tremendous need for access to hand therapy and surgery.

During the mission, the medical team participates in an educational symposium with local therapy and surgeons partners, assesses 175-200 patients, provides therapy and splints and surgery for over 75-100 children. Concurrently, the family members of the medical team are involved in community projects at our sponsored village of Chichoy Alto in the mountains of Chimaltenango. This year's projects included building of latrines and stoves for some of the village's families.

The personal rewards for me as a member of GHHF over the last decade are numerous. This year in October, I shared this experience with my daughter and we gave thanks for all that we have.

- Carolyn Levis, MSc. MD FRCS(c), Department of Surgery

Reflections from Cameroon: Mistaken Identity

I have travelled to low resource contexts for over 30 years. Sometimes I teach and sometimes I provide healthcare. Each trip is an adventure and my recent journey to north western Cameroon was no exception. On this occasion, I provided gynecologic cancer surgery to some brave women who travelled from around the country to Mbingo Hospital. This 250bed facility is expanding its portfolio. It provides systemic therapy to adults and children. In January 2020, the ground will be turned for 2 radiation bunkers. The only radiation units currently in Cameroon are a cobalt machine at the public hospital in Doula and a Linac machine at a private facility in Doula. The reason I say that the women were brave to come north, is that for the last 3 years, there has been unrest in the 2 english provinces of Cameroon. The Amba fighter are trying to promote an independent English country (in contrast to the federation of others provinces which are predominantly French speaking). In the midst of this activity schools have been closed, and there are ghost days every Monday when businesses are closed and travel is prohibited.



Image Source: Wikimedia Commons

My unexpected adventure began the day I was to leave Cameroon. Chapel at the mission hospital starts at 6:40am. The staff said their goodbyes but there was an extended time of prayer over the group of us leaving that day. After chapel, we went for breakfast. The gardener came and asked to pray with us. As we boarded the ambulance to drive to Bamenda (1 hour away), we made a conscious decision to drive with the window up and the air conditioning on. Not too long after setting out we ran into a military convoy. They were driving very slowly, so we passed them and then rapidly increased our distance from them. A while later, a bullet hit the passenger side of our vehicle and glass shattered everywhere. The driver put the pedal to the metal and a cellular phone call was made to the hospital explaining we had been shot but everyone was ok. Unfortunately there was a massive road block ahead and the driver quickly reversed the vehicle and started driving off road. We parked quite a distance from the road block and waited in a huddle by the vehicle. Eventually the military convoy reached the road block and automatic fire came from both the military and the Amba fighters. Looking for a place to lay low, there was no pride as we crawled under the ambulance. Eventually the gun fire stopped. We came out of hiding only to find ourselves surrounded by the Amba. No one asked, "Can we take your picture?". It became clear to them that we were from the hospital and we were not part of the military. They did not ask for money or devices and there was no hostage situation. (Thank you God!) We were allowed to go on our way. Not long after, we were stopped by the military. Unfortunately not being able to speak French, we could not answer their questions. They assessed the damage and we were allowed to go our way. That trip to Bamenda had taken us 3hrs. We only had 8 more hours to drive to the Doula airport.

My personal reflections on these experiences?

- Trust your driver: The driver is your best advocate and decision maker. Stay low when the bullets fly.
- Trauma is trauma even if your person is not physically assaulted – it takes time to process the trauma. There are opportunities for pre-emptive post traumatic stress counseling that can help you identify how you're doing.
- Journaling is one way to process what happened and how you are dealing with it. Debriefing with your sending agency and/or people you consider safe is important. Eventually you will find your story. And sometimes you will find yourself in a quiet place and tears will fall. That's ok.
- Remember God was there in the midst of the events and trusted you with this story. It will help you appreciate that the story is bigger than just you.
- You share a special bond with the people who were there with you, so touching base is helpful for all involved.

Laurie Elit, MSc. MD FRCS(c), Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology

Read More Find this article interesting? You may also be interested in the recent article in the Lancet on the role of Faith-based health care providers in Africa: <http://bit.ly/2R9SYcs>

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

13 Feb 2020. 1-5pm. 5th Annual Global Surgery Symposium, Toronto (<https://surgery.utoronto.ca/event/5th-global-surgery-symposium>)

April 18-20, 2020...11th Annual Consortium of Universities in Global Health [conference](#)—Washington D.C.

27 May 2020...Annual MacGObAS Joint Department Rounds, McMaster Health Centre. [More details to be released soon](#)

May 21-23, 2020...Indigenous Health Conference, Niagara Falls (<https://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/indigenoushealth/>)

May 28-31, 2020...[Bethune Roundtable Global Surgery](#) conference “Indigenous Peoples in Global Surgery” —Winnipeg

Oct 18-20, 2020...[Canadian Conference on Global Health](#) by CSIH, Ottawa

More details can be found on our website: macglobas.mcmaster.ca



Indigenous Peoples in Global Surgery
May 28-31, 2020 | University of Manitoba
Winnipeg Global Surgery Office
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

ATTENTION RESIDENTS: MacGObAS will be awarding a travel bursary to two residents* whose abstracts are accepted to the Bethune Roundtable 2020 in Winnipeg. **Stay tuned to our [website](#) in the new year for further details.** *To **qualify resident** must be from departments of Anesthesia, Obstetrics/Gynecology, or Surgery.

Thank you!

- We would like to thank our **executive committee members** who have continued to support the aims of MacGObAS over this past year, and look forward to what next year has to come. Our executive members include: Department of Anesthesia: **Dr. Joel Hamstra, Dr. Anne Wong**; Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology: **Dr. Jean Chamberlain, Dr. Laurie Elit, Dr. Mark Osmond**; Department of Surgery: **Dr. Margherita Cadeddu, Dr. Brian Cameron, Dr. Carolyn Levis**
- Thank you to **Dr. Baumann** for support and strategic advise through the partnership with the [Global Health Office](#)
- Thank you to the three Department Chairs for their continued support: **Dr. Nicolas Leyland** (Ob/Gyn), **Dr. James Paul** (Anesthesia), and **Dr. Susan Reid** (Surgery) and the Advisory Board member **Dr. Mark Crowther** (Dept of Medicine)
- We would like to recognize the contributions on the executive and continuing of **Dr. Alez Dauphin** who asked to resign from the Executive earlier this year.

We want to hear from you! If you have a story or opportunity related to Global Surgery, or you want to become involved with MacGObAS, email David Oldenburger at globas@mcmaster.ca.



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BETHUNE ROUND TABLE 2020

Call for Abstracts!

The Bethune Round Table (BRT) is an annual interdisciplinary meeting aimed at addressing the challenges of providing accessible, high-quality surgical care to marginalized patients in low-resource settings.

This year's theme, **Indigenous Peoples and Global Surgery**, will highlight research and stories about strength and resilience, and the promotion of culture that is critical to improving access to safe equitable surgical services. The BRT will feature research that celebrates and highlights initiatives that improve survival, dignity, and health of the Indigenous peoples of the world via better surgical care.

***Would you like to present at this year's BRT?
Then, please send us your proposal!***

Learn more and APPLY AT:

<https://www.bethuneroundtable.com/abstract-submission/>

DEADLINE: February 5, 2020

Please submit by this deadline if assistance, especially with visa procurement or travel funding, will be required.

Indigenous Peoples in Global Surgery

University of Manitoba, Department of Surgery

Global Surgery Office

May 28 – 31, 2020

Fort Garry Hotel

222 Broadway Ave. Winnipeg, Manitoba

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