ANNUCUMEMINT:
Dr. Wanjiku ‘Ciku’ Mathenge, founder of the Rwanda International Institute of Ophthalmology, will be joining us for the 6th annual David Paton lecture June 12th.

CONTENTS:
Pg. 2: Introduction from the Director
Pg. 3-5: Faculty Features: Dr. Jody Piltz-Seymour, Dr. Irving Raber, and Dr. Reed Kindermann
Pg. 6: Announcement of 6th Annual David Paton Lecture: Dr. Wanjiku ‘Ciku’ Mathenge
Pg. 7: Spring 2019 MSICS Faculty Course
We welcome and appreciate the volunteer efforts of students and physicians at multiple levels of training. There are opportunities to become involved with CAGO in several capacities, including teaching, operating, and participating in outreach. We have roles for educators in Haiti, Rwanda, and Burundi, and our partnership with SEE International helps to provide surgeons with the equipment necessary to operate in low resource settings.

https://www.willseyeglobal.org/volunteer/

Wills Eye is committed to fighting global blindness and our faculty continue to step up to lead the charge.

This newsletter highlights the incredible volunteer work of Wills Eye faculty at just a few of our many global sites. These selfless mentors have graciously given their time to teach and serve side by side with our partners in Rwanda and Haiti, two countries where we’ve focused our efforts to propel eye care forward.

Enjoy and consider how you can help!

Brad Feldman
Director, CAGO
Dr. Jody Piltz-Seymour is a practicing glaucoma subspecialist in the Philadelphia region, with appointments at Wills Eye Hospital, the Perelman School of Medicine, and Valley Eye Professionals. She has traveled globally to share her expertise in the field, pursuing surgical and educational engagements in Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Vietnam and most recently, Rwanda. Dr. Piltz-Seymour spent a week in December 2018 teaching and performing glaucoma surgery at the University Teaching Hospital of Kigali. She found it particularly rewarding to play a role in improving the quality of glaucoma care in a part of the world where the prevalence is so high. Dr. Piltz-Seymour worked closely with Dr. Egide Gisagara, an ophthalmologist who has a vision to make glaucoma surgery accessible to the people of Rwanda. Dr. Piltz-Seymour reflected that Dr. Egide is eager to advance glaucoma eye care in Rwanda, and she enjoyed helping him master the intricacies of glaucoma surgical management. She commented, “when you are able to teach someone like Dr. Egide who has the drive and skill to make a difference, you really feel like you have accomplished something important.”
Dr. Irving Raber’s interest in lecturing and performing cornea surgery on a global scale started over a decade ago, when he volunteered his time and surgical skills at institutions in Egypt and Kolkata, India. He has continued to pursue international work, with two trips to Rwanda in December 2016 and 2017 with the purpose of teaching and performing corneal transplants. Dr. Raber completed several cases with Dr. John Nkurikiye in Kigali at the Rwanda International Institute of Ophthalmology (RIIO) and spent time at a smaller hospital in Kabgayi where he recounts seeing a wide variety of pathology.

At the Kabgayi Eye Unit, Dr. Raber performed 20 transplants in 2016 and 27 transplants in 2017 with the generous support of the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley. Wills also provided support in the form of loaned equipment and disposable instruments, helping Dr. Raber deliver high quality, efficient care in an otherwise unfamiliar setting. Dr. Raber recalled encountering a significant number of younger patients with keratoconus, an observation that may make ophthalmologists with advanced cornea training increasingly necessary in Rwanda. Reflecting on his time in Rwanda, Dr. Raber commented, “I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The faculty, operating room staff, and patients were all really wonderful.” He recalled sharing music with the OR staff using a portable speaker, which built a sense of camaraderie with the team during his trip. The CAGO-supported residency program at RIIO continues to grow, and Dr. Raber looks forward to helping educate the new resident class in the coming year.
Dr. Reed Kindermann shares about his experience operating with SEE International in Cap Haitien, Haiti

“We walk into the packed clinic waiting room, dozens of anxious Haitians all sitting on hard wooden benches waiting patiently for their time with us. They look at us curiously: we ophthalmologists who have traveled so far to help. They come dressed in their best: ladies in Sunday hats and dresses, men as neat as possible; but in Haiti that means many are in well-worn clothes with beaten sneakers. We are in Cap Haitien on the northern coast, the second largest city in Haiti, working in a clinic stocked with the critical instruments that allow us to do our work: slit lamps, applanation tonometers, indirect ophthalmoscopes, surgical microscopes, and a well-equipped operating room.

We settle down to a morning of examining, screening, and consulting. We see crying babies with all possible afflictions ranging from pink eye to trauma to strabismus to retinoblastoma. We treat what we can and advise our Haitian hosts on the rest. We are jammed with adult patients too: we see enough cataracts to keep us busy all week but plenty of glaucoma, trauma, and plastics problems as well. Once again, we treat what we can in the clinic but schedule surgery for those whom we think we can help and triage the rest. Last year, we donated and delivered a new slit lamp equipped with SLT and we teach the local doctors there how to use it.

Late in the morning, we start operating, three tables side by side. I take turns with Jeremy Joseph, my close friend, superb teacher and top-notch MSICS (manual small incision cataract surgery) surgeon from London, mentoring our senior Wills Eye resident, retro-bulbar blocking our patients, and moving efficiently through our surgical schedule. We finish at about 8 pm, tired but exhilarated and satisfied that we have done our best to care for these gracious Haitians. Tomorrow, another day; we’ll start over.”
The 6th Annual David Paton Lecture will be given by

Dr. Wanjiku ‘Ciku’ Mathenge

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 - 2:00pm - 5:45pm

With a mission of eliminating disparities in eye care in Rwanda, Dr. Wanjiku ‘Ciku’ Mathenge co-founded the Rwanda International Institute of Ophthalmology (RIIO) with Dr. John Nkurikiye in 2011. She was the first ophthalmologist to receive a PhD in the region, and has advanced training in multiple disciplines, including retina and community ophthalmology. Dr. Ciku has served as a medical advisor for the Fred Hollows Foundation for many years. She is also on committees for the African Ophthalmology Council, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, the International Council of Ophthalmology, and the College of Ophthalmology of Eastern Central and Southern Africa, and she is regular consultant for the World Health Organization. In recognition of her efforts to identify sustainable solutions in eye care, Dr. Ciku received the 2018 SEE International Humanitarian of the Year Award. Dr. Ciku has been working with CAGO to build an ophthalmology residency program at RIIO, and she will be directing a multi-center pediatric screening project with Dr. Alex Levin in Rwanda beginning in March of 2019.
In May 2019, the Center for Academic Global Ophthalmology (CAGO) in alliance with SEE International will be running another manual small incision cataract surgery (MSICS) course at Wills Eye Hospital. The CME-granting course will include didactics and a wet lab, with the goal of preparing you to be comfortable approaching new and challenging cases. We will have multiple seasoned MSICS instructors ready to work one-on-one to develop your skills.

Sign up link: https://www.seeintl.org/pa-may-2019