

Access to Professional Opportunities Improves Skills, Expands Knowledge of Those from Limited-resource Settings

KATIE MCMULLEN

► During the AAOS 2018 Annual Meeting, Fanuel Bellet, MD, attended a total of 32 hours of training. The time included a four-hour session about trauma care; lectures on conditions of the shoulders, knees, hips, and spine; and sessions on trauma and bone tumors—both in children and adults. He also completed observerships at institutions throughout the United States—all as he prepared to take on a new leadership role at the rural Haydom Lutheran Hospital in the Manyara region of north central Tanzania.

Dr. Bellet, former resident at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC) in Moshi, Tanzania, received support for the education and professional development opportunities through the Health Volunteers Overseas' (HVO) Wyss Scholarship for Future Leaders in Global Health. HVO is a global health nonprofit organization that provides education and training for health workers in resource-scarce countries.

"Our Wyss Scholarship aims to create opportunity for providers from low- and middle-income countries that might not otherwise be available to them," noted HVO Executive Director Nancy A. Kelly, MHS.

In order to track the impact of the continuing education and professional development opportunities funded through the Wyss Scholarship, HVO conducts annual surveys of former scholars. The reports are used to assess the skills and knowledge gained through their scholarship-funded activities and track how former scholars employ those skills to advance in their fields and improve patient care at their facilities.

Two years following his funded activities, Dr. Bellet reported that his experience at AAOS' Annual Meeting two years ago still serves him in his position at Haydom Lutheran Hospital. "I learned how to be more organized and that really has improved my organization skills as a leader in my current institution as a head of the orthopaedic department and assistant medical officer in charge, assisting in daily supervision of the clinical work in my hospital," noted Dr. Bellet.

He credits his interactions with AAOS attendees, the sessions he attended, and his observerships with HVO volunteers following the meeting as the means by which he learned better organization within the operating theater—allowing for more efficient surgeries and, ultimately, more patients served since he

assumed a leadership role at his facility. HVO's Wyss Scholarship has also supported three additional orthopaedic surgeons from KCMC, as well as surgeons from St. Lucia and Bhutan, over the past five years.

"It was an awesome experience to meet different delegates from different countries," said Sonam Kelzang, MBBS, a Bhutanese resident in general surgery, after attending the 43rd Annual Scientific Congress of the Royal College of Surgeons of Thailand in July 2018 as a Wyss Scholar.

Dr. Kelzang attended training on perioperative care, nutrition in surgery, and deep vein thrombosis prophylaxis, provided by international experts. He then arranged to present the information to his junior surgical residents. Recently, Dr. Kelzang reported that the "knowledge in the field of nutrition care process" he acquired has been an important component in his teaching curriculum, as he leads ward rounds and overseas training for junior surgeons.

HVO also supports opportunities for individuals to present research. The most recent orthopaedic surgeon to receive an HVO Wyss Scholarship, Mubashir Jusabani, MD, attended the Global Spine Conference (GSC) in Toronto in May 2019, presenting an abstract about developing and implementing multidisciplinary spine rounds at KCMC.

Dr. Jusabani is a junior resident in the spinal unit at KCMC. In January 2018, multidisciplinary spine rounds were instituted at KCMC. Despite being in a low-resource setting, Dr. Jusabani's team noted a significant improvement in outcomes for patients with traumatic spinal cord injuries.

"I was further convinced of the potential improvement in spine care that is possible in our setting during a neurotrauma short course at the country's national health center, Muhimbili National Hospital," said Dr. Jusabani. "When I learned that GSC 2019 was inviting abstract submissions, I felt it was the ideal platform to share data from our team's multidisciplinary spine experience with individuals who have a mutual goal—delivery of the finest spine care possible."

At GSC 2019, Dr. Jusabani attended several sessions and lectures and met experts in his field. He specifically identified "sessions and poster presentations discussing degenerative lumbar and cervical pathologies, spine infections, and spine trauma" as being "invaluable." Since the conference, he has put his new



The 2018 Health Volunteers Overseas Wyss Scholar Fanuel Bellet, MD, displaying a copy of AAOS Now. COURTESY OF GLEN CRAWFORD, MD

knowledge and skills to work, resulting in not only improved decision-making for patients, but also a better environment in multidisciplinary spine rounds for information to be shared.

"Apart from allowing me to make more informed decisions while working with spine patients, I am able to conduct bedside teaching sessions with students more confidently and share quite a bit of what I gained at GSC 2019," reported Dr. Jusabani. "Decision-making during the rounds is appreciably influenced by what I learned at the meeting and after observing achievements. [After reviewing] GSC 2019 presentations of similar spine teams in low-resource settings, my team and I have made it a point to implement decisions based on peer-reviewed literature."

Dr. Jusabani summarized: "Apart from gaining a wealth of information from the sessions at the Congress, presentations discussing the importance of data collection and analysis and self-appraisal left a lasting impression. ... I recall my time at GSC 2019 quite



The 2019 Health Volunteers Overseas Wyss Scholar Mubashir Jusabani, MD, with Isador Lieberman, MD, MBA, FRCS, at the Global Spine Conference 2019. COURTESY OF MUBASHIR JUSABANI, MD

fondly. I was able to present the experience of a young team from the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro and also gain a wealth of knowledge from some of the leading experts in spine care."

Katie McMullen is communications manager at HVO.