

MIZZOU ORTHOPAEDIC RESIDENTS VOLUNTEER OVERSEAS: A 30-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE

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Africa

Thirty years ago, orthopaedic resident physician Dr. John “Jay” Maddox took his family to Africa on a four-month medical mission trip. This courageous adventure was the first known instance of a University of Missouri orthopaedic trainee providing volunteer medical service in a faraway undeveloped country. Sponsored by the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Jay and Linda Maddox journeyed in 1979 to Ogbomosa, Nigeria, with their two toddlers Ashley (age 3) and Jeremiah (age one and a half). The Baptist Health Center in Ogbomosa had no running water; precipitation was collected in above-ground cisterns from storms that occurred daily during rainy season. During the dry season, water was siphoned from the cistern via a hose for daily household needs. After it rained, the parents would go outdoors to a rigged-up water gutter to take a shower (Figure 1). Young toddler Jeremiah grew up to follow in his father’s footsteps, and he is now in his fourth year of orthopedic residency training at the University of Alabama-Birmingham.

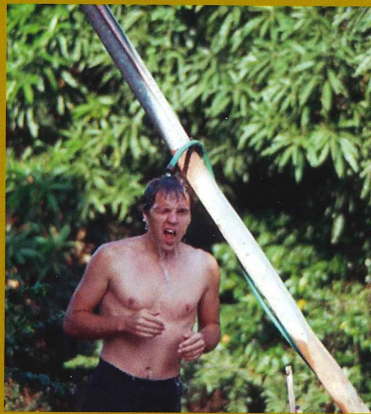


Figure 1. In this 1979 photograph, MU orthopaedic resident Dr. Jay Maddox takes a jungle shower in rainwater collected in an above ground cistern near the Baptist Health Center in Ogbomosa, Nigeria.

West Indies

In May of 1989, resident physician Dr. Joel Jeffries assisted the author in a humanitarian project to provide prostheses for amputees on the tiny impoverished Caribbean island of St. Lucia in the West Indies. The University of Missouri Orthopaedic Association, comprised of friends and alumni of our training program, graciously supported the project with generous donations of thousands of dollars to purchase modular lower extremity prostheses for needy patients.¹

Orthopaedic nurse Sylvia Petro, RN, joined Dr. Jeffries and Dr. Gainor on the trip to St. Lucia to help inaugurate an amputee clinic at St. Jude Hospital, a resource-poor medical facility where Dr. Gainor was the Orthopaedics Overseas program director. Founded in 1960, Orthopaedics Overseas is a nonprofit,

nongovernmental organization based in Washington D.C., and its mission is improving global health through education.² Health Volunteers Overseas evolved in 1985 as a

multi-specialty organization based on the successful model of Orthopaedics Overseas. This humanitarian trip was the first instance of a University of Missouri orthopaedic resident, attending physician, and nurse going abroad together as a team to provide volunteer medical service in an undeveloped country (Figure 2).

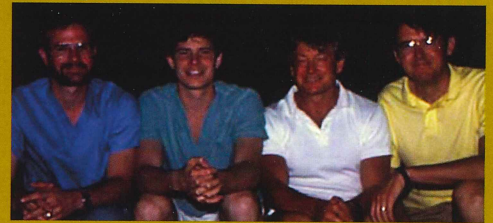


Figure 2. On a humid tropical night on the island of St. Lucia in the West Indies, Orthopaedics Overseas volunteers gather in the dimly lit courtyard of St. Jude Hospital to discuss the day’s work. Pictured in this 1989 photo are MU orthopaedic resident Dr. Joel Jeffries (far left) and author Dr. Barry Gainor (far right).

Philippines and Vietnam

In 2001, chief resident Dr. Eldin Karaikovic traveled



Figure 3. While serving as an OO/OREF Fellow in the Philippines in 2001, MU chief resident Dr. Eldin Karaikovic visits the bedside of a spine surgery patient with the ward nurse.

to the Philippines and Vietnam as an Orthopaedics Overseas/Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation Fellow (OO/OREF). While overseas, he performed spinal procedures for adolescent idiopathic scoliosis, trauma, tumors, and deformities of the spine in all age groups (Figure 3). He gave many lectures, grand rounds, and

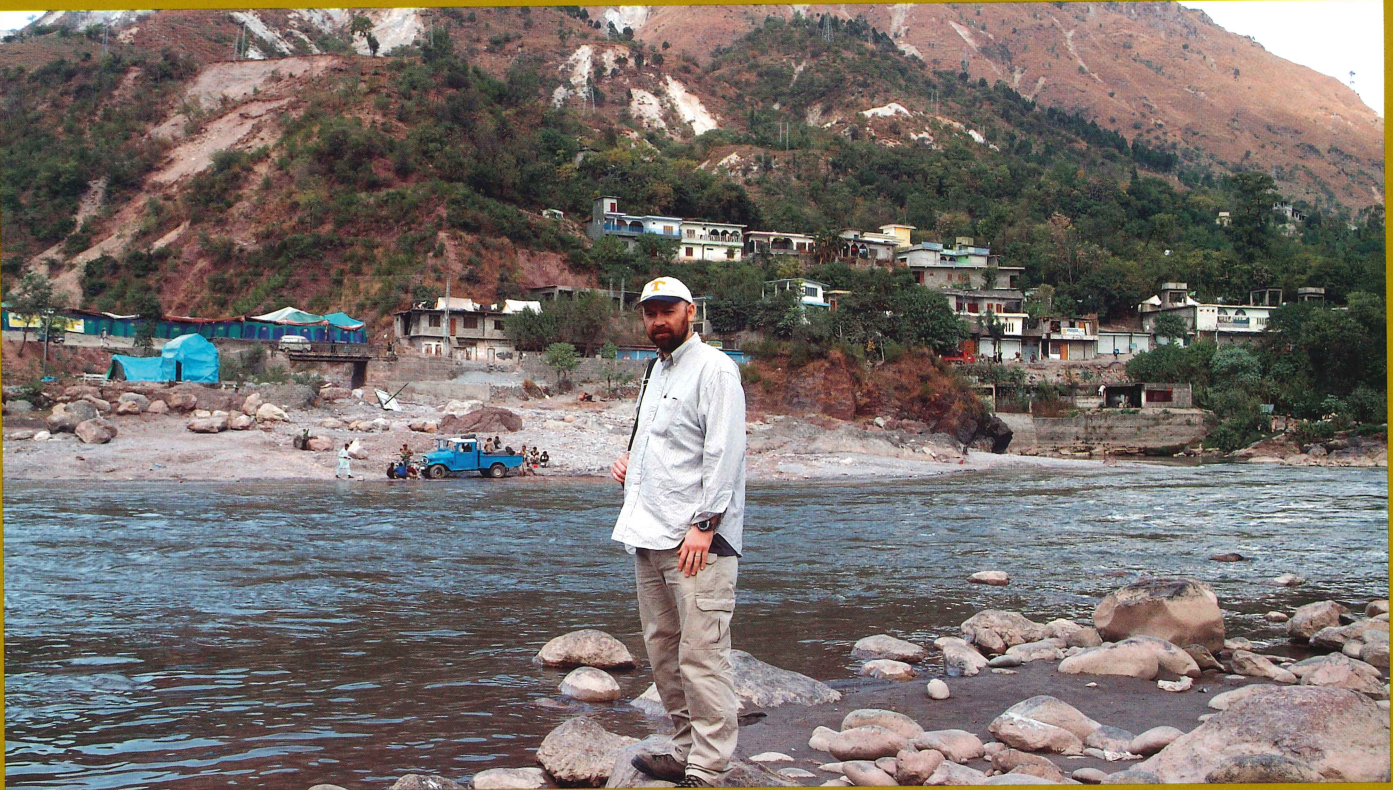


Figure 4. In Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, MU orthopaedic resident Dr. Pete Kazmier stands near the epicenter of the catastrophic earthquake that devastated the region where he served with a medical relief effort in 2005 that was sponsored by Shifa International.

presentations to orthopaedic surgeons and residents. Since this 2001 inaugural trip, Dr. Karaikovic has lobbied medical companies to donate implants, equipment, and medication for his volunteer medical work throughout the world. He has also used his personal funds to provide medical equipment, instruments, and medical books to war torn Bosnia. Dr. Karaikovic is now an Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, in Chicago.

Pakistan

In November, 2005, orthopaedic resident Dr. Pete Kazmier went to Pakistan as part of a medical relief effort for those injured in a colossal earthquake that devastated the region of Kashmir (Figure 4). Dr. Kazmier performed numerous trauma surgeries at the Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad, Pakistan. The Great Pakistan Earthquake, as it came to be known, was on the same scale as the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. Landslides blocked mountain roads impeding humanitarian aid and medical relief to more than 3 million Pakistanis who were left homeless by the calamity that killed 79,000 people.³

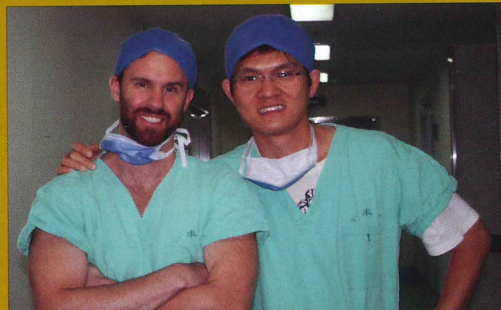


Figure 5. In the autumn of 2008, MU orthopaedic chief resident Dr. Jason Lowe pauses between OR cases with Dr. Wang Youngshu who is a chief resident in Wenzhou, China. Dr. Lowe traveled to Asia sponsored as an OO/OREF Fellow.

China

In the autumn of 2008, chief resident Dr. Jason Lowe spent a month in Wenzhou, China as an OO/OREF Fellow. While in China, Dr. Lowe worked closely with total joint and trauma surgeons. He assisted on 40 surgical cases, presented four grand rounds, and attended a three-day Chinese Orthopaedic Association meeting (Figure 5).

Conclusion

The orthopaedic surgery residents in the University of Missouri training program have a long and honorable tradition of international volunteer

service to underserved peoples around the globe.

References

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