

# NEWS PEACE

## “WE CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE”

by Leslie Toledo, Senior Director, Global Health Programs

“Working as a doctor in Africa can be tough,” according to Physicians for Peace (PFP) international medical educator and Pediatric Intensivist, Dr. Job Calis. “Children often present late and sometimes it is difficult to save a life despite all efforts made by our new Mercy James Centre (MJC) Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) team. Recently, we had a special visitor, an 11 year old girl who developed Guillain-Barre syndrome, an auto-immune disease that causes a temporary paralysis of all muscles, including those needing to breathe. She required respiratory support and was intubated in our unit on Christmas day. She was on a ventilator for more than two months. [Once] able to breathe on her own, she spent the last month in our main ward. Last week she was finally discharged home. Still unable to walk long distances, she was carried in today on the back of her sister, wearing her most beautiful dress. They came to thank us all for all care she received. It’s moments like these that really make you smile.”

Dr. Calis continues, “It was an emotional moment because we all realized that without the new PICU she would not have survived. It made me proud of the team since it involved two months of intensive care teamwork and made me realize once more that we can make the difference.”



PFP is supporting Dr. Calis as a medical volunteer for one year at Mercy James in Blantyre, Malawi. Under his leadership, the perioperative team at MJC PICU receives critical care training.

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NEVER DOUBT THAT  
A SMALL THOUGHTFUL GROUP  
OF COMMITTED CITIZENS  
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.  
INDEED...IT’S THE ONLY THING  
THAT EVER HAS.  
— MARGARET MEAD



(L to R) Aubrey Filimoni, Surgical Clinical Officer at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital and PFP-sponsored coordinator for district hospital outreach along with Jamie Morgan, PFP CEO and Leslie Toledo, PFP Senior Director, Global Health Programs.

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE

As a mother of three, with one medically complex child, I’m no stranger to our local children’s hospital in the US, and it is not lost on me the intricate network that must run well, day after day, in order to receive quality care. I depend on it, advocate for it, and feel utterly vulnerable when any piece of it isn’t functioning at 100%. Mothers in Malawi are just like me.

At PFP we look at existing gaps our partners struggle with and leverage resources, both human and financial, so that we can make a difference in the lives of these children and their families. And the truth is, we need our village to do that. We need you.

Along with support to Dr. Calis, PFP also supports a critical care nurse educator who volunteers her time to train and mentor MJC nurses. We support an operating room to complete surgical cases that would otherwise not happen. We fund two surgical registrars (like residents in the US) who will go on to become surgeons in Malawi, a country that has only 42 surgeons for the entire population of 17,000,000. It is an incredible opportunity: to build surgical capacity so that thousands of people, who simply would not otherwise have access to surgical care, receive it.

Thank you for being a member of our village. The difference you make matters to us – and to those we collectively serve.

*Leslie*  
Leslie Toledo



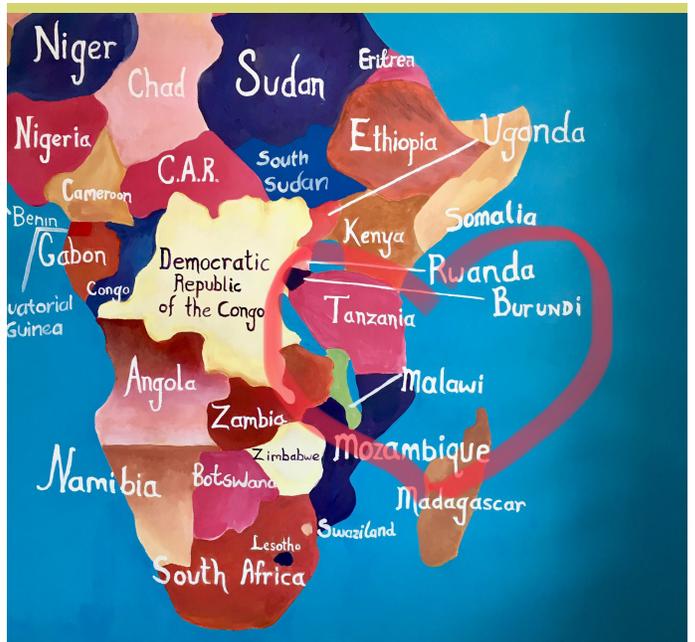
PFP volunteer, Dr. Job Calis during morning surgical rounds with surgical registrars and nurses in Malawi.



Malawian ICU nurses Lydia and Modester discuss preparations for critical care patients with PFP volunteer, Carolyn Ramwell, RN during ICU nurse training in Malawi.



Defibrillator training with nurse educator Carolyn Ramwell and critical care nurses at Mercy James Center.



Upon arrival in Malawi, the PFP team quickly learned why the country is called the "warm heart" of Africa!