

# 2019 ASA Global Scholars Program: The Pursuit for Access to Safe and Quality Perioperative Care to Children Around the World

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**Young physician leaders, Dr. Olurotimi Aaron from Nigeria and Dr. Angela Onyando from Kenya, traveled 9,000 miles from their home countries in October 2019** to Seattle, Washington and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania respectively, to participate in the ASA Global Scholars Program.

Through the guidance of the SPA Global Committee, the recent graduates of the University of Nairobi Pediatric Anesthesia Fellowship program applied and were chosen as esteemed representatives of their home countries in their role as ASA Global Scholars. After a two-week medical observership, they traveled to Orlando, Florida, to take part in the annual Society for Pediatric Anesthesia (SPA) and American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) meetings.



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With their fellowship year complete, Dr. Aaron and Dr. Onyando returned to their home countries of Nigeria and Kenya where only a handful of pediatric anesthesiologists practice. They are the sixth graduating class from the fellowship and among 16 anesthesiologists from seven countries trained. The University of Nairobi/World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists Pediatric Anesthesia Fellowship is funded by the SPA and ImPACT Africa to increase physician leadership and subspecialty training of anesthesiology leaders in Africa, and to address the deficit of physician anesthesiologists in low-middle income countries (LMICs).

The 12-month pediatric anesthesia fellowship has been transformative for the recent graduates. Not only do the fellows go through months of pediatric anesthesia clinical rotations, they also take courses in medical education and medical simulation. Dr. Onyando shared, "The pediatric anesthesia fellowship program has made me a better doctor, a better teacher and supervisor, and has empowered me to be a leader in anesthesia. Above all, it has inspired me through mentors to join the pursuit for access to safe and quality perioperative care to children all around the world."

The fellowship culminated in the ASA Global Scholars Program in which the fellows participated in a medical observership in one of two children's hospitals: the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and Seattle Children's Hospital (SCH). The two hospitals funded the fellows' time in the program. In addition to time in the



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Dr. Angela Onyando with SPA member Dr. Elizabeth Drum enjoying Philadelphia.

operating theater, the fellows participated in resident and fellow lectures, Grand Rounds, time in pediatric ICUs, and time with acute pain services. Dr. Onyando took part in CHOP's 11th Annual Pediatric Global Health Conference and presented a medically challenging case. She also presented on Pediatric Anesthesia in Kenya to the Department of Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine at CHOP. Dr. Aaron participated in a cadaver lab and regional ultrasound workshop during his time in Seattle and presented on Pediatric Anesthesia in Nigeria to the Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine at SCH.

Describing his observership, Dr. Aaron shared, "it complimented the experience and exposure of the fellowship in Nairobi, granting opportunity to witness the conduct of pediatric anesthesia in different locations, with wide variation in experience of anesthesiologists, drugs, equipment and technology." He stated that the encounter left him with "feeling of great responsibility of ensuring acceptable standards

of care despite limitations" in his place of practice and to "teach medical students and residents the same."

The time in Seattle and Philadelphia wasn't all work and no play. Drs. Aaron and Onyando were able to experience some of the sights and foods of the city with fellow SPA members.



Dr. Olurotimi Aaron with Dr. David Liston and family

Following their observerships, the global scholars networked with other anesthesiologists, attended lectures, and each presented a medically challenging case at the SPA and ASA meetings in Orlando. Dr. Onyando described the conferences as an "invaluable experience, interacting with world leaders in anesthesiology, gaining knowledge through world-class presentations, and sharing experiences of both successes and challenges in perioperative patient management in different parts of the world."

As Drs. Aaron and Onyando return home, SPA faculty look forward to supporting their leadership in pediatric anesthesiology in Nigeria and Kenya and in continuing the mentoring relationships that were started during their fellowship and observerships. We join with them in "the pursuit for access to safe and quality perioperative care to children all around the world."



Left: Dr. Angela Onyando and Dr. Olurotimi Aaron at their poster presentation at ANESTHESIOLOGY 2019.