

Lisa Ritenour

From: Scott & Tina Lawrence [scott.lawrence=sim.org@mail141.atl121.mcsv.net] on behalf of Scott & Tina Lawrence [scott.lawrence@sim.org]
Sent: Thursday, July 27, 2017 1:09 PM
To: Lisa Ritenour
Subject: Lawrences in Ethiopia: Country Meets City

Country Meets City



Our mission is to demonstrate the love of God through healing the blind, caring for the poor, giving hope to the hopeless, and mentoring future leaders in eye care. With the generous support of our friends, family and churches, we moved to Ethiopia in 2015. Nearly 8 months since opening our new eye center, we have begun to appreciate how much we live on the edge between the country and the city.



Facebook



Scott



Tina

Country Meets City



"I have a little boy I need you to see." There was an urgency in my friend's voice as he relayed the message over the phone. "When do you want to send him to our center?", I responded. Figuring I had a day or two to plan for this referral, I glanced out my clinic door to see a long stream of patients positioning to pounce in my room at the slightest opportunity. "Now. I need you to see him now if at all possible," he explained.

"Abe" had been brought by his father to a rural, medical outreach led

by my friend, an Ethiopian doctor who specializes in Family Medicine. He and his son came from a farming community in the country and had no access to a doctor. "My son can't see" he told my friend. A quick exam revealed that the boy was completely blind in his left eye and had little sight left in his right eye. Based on his appearance, the clinical team concluded that this 8 year old patient likely suffered from longstanding congenital glaucoma.

The team's initial assessment was correct. The pressure in Abe's only seeing eye was nearly 60 - 3 times the normal limit. After starting him on some oral medications and eye drops designed to lower eye pressure, I discussed the need for emergency eye surgery. Though nervous about the gravity of the situation, the father placed his trust in our team. We prayed together that God would watch over Abe throughout the course of his surgery and recovery

My encounter with Abe and his father is not an uncommon experience here. Nestled in a city of 6 million, we routinely care for families from rural villages who make their way to Addis out of desperation. The borders between city and country are blurred. By coordinating with my colleague, all of "A's" care and transportation needs are being provided at no cost to this family. After operating on Abe's right eye that next day, we have watched in amazement as his vision has gradually improved from legally blind to near perfect vision.

Scaling up the Solution



Ethiopia's population is nearly 100 million strong... and growing. Yet,

there is only about 1 ophthalmologist per million people for the majority of the country. Our team is convinced that the long-term solution for this overwhelming need is training. Despite running a busy clinical and surgical practice, we are investing a great deal of time and energy into training and mentoring the next generations of Ethiopian eye surgeons. There are many ways to approach this goal.

One of the ways we can help to support training is by bringing in teams of people who have special skills combined with a passion to pass those skills onto others. Drs. Fleming and Goecks (pictured above with Dr. Asrat) traveled from Memphis, Tennessee to Addis Ababa to help train a local ophthalmologist in orbital and oculoplastic surgery. Through this effort, we were also able to bring healing to many patients who were otherwise without hope. Additionally, Scott continues to teach and mentor residents each week at St. Paul's Hospital, one of the leading government training programs. One of the second-year residents training with Scott - Dr. Konjit (lower left) - examines the optic nerve of a patient from St. Paul's Hospital. As the Discovery Eye Center continues to attract patients from all over Ethiopia as well as neighboring countries, we anticipate an expansion of resident and medical student rotations this Fall.

'Family Matters'



Having successfully completed another school year and managed a flood of patient exams and surgeries in June, our family traveled back to the U.S. for the remainder of the rainy season. We continue to be amazed (and thankful!) at the boys' ability to travel back and forth between cultures. We are enjoying re-connecting with many of you who faithfully support our work in Ethiopia as well as the family we have left behind. We can't thank you enough for your all of your support and encouragement.

James is still enjoying running while Jon Nathan and Joshua are making their way through a bucket list of food that is less/un-available in Ethiopia. Scott has several upcoming meetings and speaking engagements (CA, NC and

Atlanta) related to building collaborations for the medical and educational work at the eye center in Addis. We are also preparing for our return to Ethiopia in early August.

Praises:

A wonderful week of outreach and surgical care with the visiting team from Memphis, Tennessee

Grant funding obtained to start a glaucoma fellowship training program in Ethiopia beginning this year

Reunions with many friends and family in the United States

Prayer Requests:

A merciful transition for new SIM families arriving in Ethiopia, including one family with whom Tina and Scott will be intentionally supporting

Continued blessing and guidance as we visit with ministry partners and churches the next couple of weeks.

A smooth start to the year for Bingham Academy, blessing on the many new teachers, and wisdom for Scott as he starts to serve on the Bingham Board.

How You Can Be Involved

By investing in our work in Ethiopia, you play a vital role in bringing sight and care to thousands of Ethiopians. We need both prayer and financial partners to stand with us as we respond to the incredible need for eye care and leadership development in Ethiopia. Would you consider becoming a monthly partner or making a gift by clicking on the button below? All gifts are fully tax-deductible.

Give Today

Can't give online?

Send checks to: *SIM USA, P.O. Box 7900, Charlotte, NC 28273*

Remember to write our account number in the memo line (043201)

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We love hearing from you!

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