

A dynamic duo

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Paul and Maureen Sloan “get” CURE.

They embody our mission, they love our kids, and they’ve devoted significant portions of their lives in service to the “least of these.” The Sloans first came into the CURE orbit in the late 1990s when Paul’s colleague, Dr. Ben Warf, left his position at the University of Kentucky hospital to become the Medical Director of CURE Uganda. It was through Dr. Warf that the Sloans met CURE’s founders, Dr. Scott and Sally Harrison, and Maureen ended up visiting CURE Uganda in 2004, with Paul following suit when he could take time off from his position as Professor of Anesthesiology and Vice Chair of Research at the University of Kentucky.

In the almost two decades since their first involvement with CURE, the Sloans have become an intimate partner of CURE, with Maureen taking on the title of Nurse Consultant and Paul volunteering his anesthesiology services. With their experiences combined, they have served with CURE in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the Philippines, Niger, and Zambia. As CURE’s Nurse Consultant, Maureen has used her position to stimulate the various nursing departments to both excellence and compassion. She has also provided training for nurses and general medical staff in the American Heart Association’s Basic Life Support qualifications and CURE’s Christian World of Nursing Seminar. As a visiting anesthesiologist, Paul has volunteered his skills in the various operating rooms across our network and has kept our anesthesia staff up to date on some of the latest developments, such as ultrasound-guided local anesthetic nerve blocks for pain management, vastly improving the experiences of our patients.

Recently, Paul has devised a system to bridge the gap between his passions at the University of Kentucky and here at CURE. When offered a six month sabbatical from the University of Kentucky, Paul chose to come here to CURE Niger, not only to volunteer his services, but also to develop a Global Health elective for his anesthesiology residents back home. This opportunity allows the university residents to continue receiving hands-on professional training from practicing professionals while also experiencing the unique challenges presented in offering high quality healthcare in an under-resourced country. At the same time, the CURE Niger anesthesiology team benefitted from continuing education in the form of Dr. Sloan’s instruction as well as the opportunity to spend time with some of the newest generation of doctors in the United States.

For this first round of the Global Health elective, Dr. Sloan and CURE Niger hosted a series of four University of Kentucky anesthesiology residents over late 2018 and early 2019. The residents worked in-country for their two-week rotation. Their time was spent consulting with patients and working in the CURE Niger operating rooms while doing their best to understand the cultural nuances and how those influence how medical care is administered.

Josh Korn, current CURE International Grants Manager and previous Executive Director of CURE Niger, muses how there may be a slight agenda on our part. “Perhaps the short-term elective for the residents will encourage them to return to low-income countries for future educational projects,” Korn says. Whether they return to work

with CURE or not, there is a serious shortage of skilled medical professionals in many developing nations, and if we can be part of the story for even one anesthesiologist making the decision to use their skills in this type of setting, it will make a tremendous impact.

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