

# SCALPEL'S EDGE



A GIFT OF LIGHT, HOPE AND SURGERY TO PERU

SPRING 2018 | ISSUE 24

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“ I believe it is important to impart what I have learned to the next generation, primarily because great mentors and former faculty of my own at Emory, Washington and Brown Universities, as well as the Universities of Miami, Washington, Mississippi and Minnesota (the places where I trained and practiced), set me aflame! ”

—Peter A. Cole, MD

## SETTING FIRES



*The Match-Light of  
Academic Medicine*

by Peter A. Cole, M.D. - President,  
Scalpel At The Cross

As many of you know, my primary calling is to academic medicine. Do you wonder, “What is academic medicine?” It is the integration of education and research into the discipline of a doctor’s clinical practice of medicine or surgery. To say that I have an academic practice is to imply that I integrate training (education) and scientific investigation (research) into my career of diagnosing and treating patients with orthopaedic conditions. It is a labor of love, which distinguishes 5% of physician careers. It is hard work, poorly paid, very gratifying, and highly flammable. In this article, I will focus on the educational side of my career, rather than the research side.

Academic medicine is traditionally practiced at university medical centers and teaching hospitals, where great investments are made to support the mission of discovery and the transfer of knowledge. I work for the University of Minnesota, at Regions Hospital in Saint Paul, one of its main teaching hospitals. My specialty is Orthopaedic Traumatology, which covers injuries to the musculoskeletal system, including bones and joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments. Complex fracture work is my clinical passion.

I teach medical students, residents and fellows—every day! Medical students spend four years in school including specialty rotations at our hospital; orthopaedic residents spend five years studying on different clinical rotations in our department; and most fellowships, which certify specialization, are one year in duration.

Residents and fellows come from around the United States to train in our department, and these positions are highly competitive. I also train foreign doctors through experiences called mini-fellowships that are 6-12 weeks long. My former fellows have gone on to practice in 14 countries and 20 states domestically.

I believe it is important to impart what I have learned to the next generation, primarily because great mentors and former faculty of my own at Emory, Washington and Brown Universities, as well as the Universities of Miami, Washington, Mississippi and Minnesota (the places where I trained and practiced), set me aflame! My work is a form of worship to my Savior, not in the sense that I “worship my work,” but rather I worship my God using my work as a gift, in the same way the Little Drummer Boy gave back his music to his Savior; thus, our ministry was named, Scalpel At The Cross (<http://scalpelatthecross.org/the-meaning/>).

This passing of the torch to younger students and physicians in training is truly one of the great traditions of medicine. One of the privileges of such a long educational path to becoming a doctor is the richness which comes from training and practicing in different places, something I always sought to do, perhaps because of a sense of adventure on the part of Nancy and myself. We have been on this journey together for thirty-five years—a great team to be sure!



1986 at The Mai Kai, Ft Lauderdale, FL - Nancy and I celebrating medical school acceptance!

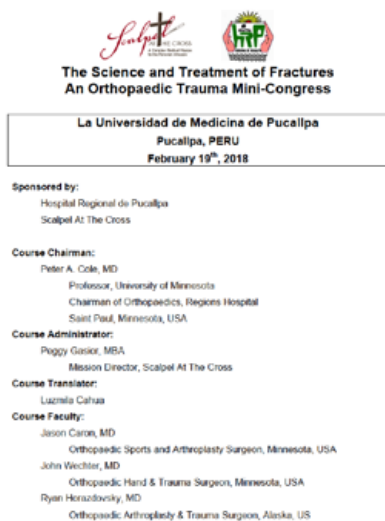
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# SETTING FIRES

It is with focused intention at Scalpel At The Cross that we execute on the same principles of knowledge and practice transfer from academic medicine so that our work is a legacy, which stays afire for generations. The torch, which is passed, is meant for starting fires in other young American and Peruvian hearts, for setting new hearts afire with passions in education and missions.

Though in the surgical discipline it is most common to teach during surgery and on rounds, like an apprenticeship, we still use the conference setting and lecture format for education as well. I am very excited to say that Scalpel At The Cross led the first Orthopaedic Trauma Conference ever in Pucallpa, Peru, during this past trip in February. It was amazing to witness Peruvian surgeons and medical students riveted to the lectures of my former residents, Drs. Caron, Horazdovsky, and Wechter. This was a spectacular success and supplemented our in-hospital training beautifully. I was very proud of my former trainees, who themselves were academicians for a day!

## 2018 PUCALLPA, PERU SCALPEL AT THE CROSS TRAUMA CONFERENCE PROGRAM



AGENDA		
Time	Topic	Faculty
2:00 p.m.	Welcome & Introduction	Peter A. Cole, MD
2:15 p.m.	Surgical Approaches - Upper Extremity	John Wechter, MD
2:45 p.m.	Treatment of Traumatic Hand Conditions	John Wechter, MD
3:15 p.m.	Questions and Discussion	Audience & Faculty
3:30 p.m.	BREAK	
4:00 p.m.	Surgical Approaches - Lower Extremity	Ryan Horazdovsky, MD
4:30 p.m.	Concepts in Nailing & Plating Femur Fractures	Jason Caron, MD
5:00 p.m.	Biology & Mechanics of Fracture Healing	Peter A. Cole, MD
5:30 p.m.	BREAK	
6:00 p.m.	The Treatment of Tibia Nonunions	Ryan Horazdovsky, MD
6:30 p.m.	Scalpel At The Cross	Jason Caron, MD

Academic medicine reminds me of the work of Jesus' disciples who lit mankind aflame with the story of the gospel of grace, manifested through the death and resurrection of Christ. Let me work a metaphor here: academic medicine is the gospel, the passion of academic doctors is the excitement of the disciples, physicians educating are the disciples telling the story of Jesus, the fire is the Holy Spirit, and the converted medical trainees are those saved through the acceptance of Christ as their Savior. Not to be blasphemous with the analogy, for the medical doctor is but a speck next to the Great Physician Jesus; however, while physicians treat ailments and fix bones, Christ mends hearts and heals lives.

*"And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them."*  
-Acts 2:3

Heartwarming quotes from former trainees, which I received by email this past month, underscore for me that the treasure of education is the legacy of the student.

*Dr. Cole,  
Just wanted to share with you that I recently matched at Hospital for Special Surgery in New York, and will be starting residency there in a couple months. You might be happy to know that I talked about my Scalpel experience at almost every interview I went to. My experience in Pucallpa was really the impetus for my interest in orthopaedic surgery, so I am really grateful to you for creating the organization and giving me the opportunity to help there back in 2011. It was truly a life-changing experience and I sincerely hope to be a part of it again one day.*

*Drake Lebrun  
(pre-medical student, University of Pennsylvania)*

Medical Trainee	#	# Career Confirmation	#Return Trips
Pre Medical Student	6	3	0
Pre Nursing Student	3	3	12
Medical Student (Pre Ortho)	6	5	0
Nursing Student	2	2	12
Resident in Orthopaedics	14	14	16
Resident in Other Specialty	1	1	0
Fellow in Orthopaedic Trauma	3	3	0

In addition, there have been high school students, Physician Assistants, Physical Therapists, and doctors beyond formal training, who have been caught by Scalpel's Fire--one aspect that distinguishes our ministry from others. †

# WE ARE NOT ALONE

by Miguel A. Cahua, M.D. (Peruvian surgeon who partners with Scalpel in Pucallpa)

During our morning rounds, on a day like any other at Yarinacocha's Hospital Amazonico, we found a young man in bed #15 with a fractured leg. The fracture needed surgery, so we gave him a list of materials to buy including surgical nails and an external fixation system. The patient told us that he did not have money, so we looked for the person who brought him to the hospital. This person told us that he did not have money to buy the orthopaedic materials either and that he actually did not even know the patient; he had only done the young man a favor, bringing him to the hospital from the place where he was injured.

So we asked the patient for more information:

- 1 Who do you live with?  
**I live alone.**
- 2 Do you have a wife or children?  
**No, I don't.**
- 3 Do you have a house or property?  
**No, I don't.**
- 4 Do you have any animals, a pig, a dog, a cat, a hen?  
**No, I don't.**
- 5 That means you don't have anything or anyone to help you?  
**No, I don't.**

On morning rounds every day, we would joke with him and give him a hard time, "What you have says much about what you are worth, but you have nothing." We spoke to him about his poor and precarious situation, "You do not have anything; you do not have a wife or children; you do not have a job or savings for these difficult times. How is that possible? You need to change your situation of being a man who does not have anything or anyone by his side."

He was brought to the hospital during a Scalpel At The Cross orthopaedic surgical campaign. The



medical mission team took care of the patient, performed the surgery, and provided him with the surgical nails and external fixation system free of charge. But apparently, they gave him more than that. The patient was really happy and grateful to the Scalpel team members who visited him on morning rounds every day, treating and caring for him until they left.

On the day he was being discharged from the hospital, we told him, "Well, you are being discharged from hospital; now, where are you going? Who is going to pick you up? Who is going to take care of you? If you do not have anything or anyone, what are you going to do? Who is going to help you now that the Scalpel team has left?" The patient answered without any concern on his face, "GOD WILL HELP ME." We asked him, "How is God going to help you? You do not have anyone. You are alone." He answered, "No, I am not alone anymore; God will help me." He thought about the fact that if God sent His angels from so far away to serve and take care of him, healing him in that difficult time, He would not leave him on the day of his discharge from the hospital.



2017 Rosa Nautica, Lima - Dr. Peter A. Cole with Dr. Miguel A. Cahua

During the next Scalpel At The Cross campaign, the team saw him doing well and healing, so they removed the external fixation system and the surgical nails. He looked different; he was calm and happy, and he understood he was not alone anymore in this life. God was with him, and he was under His protection.

*"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

-Isaiah 41:10 ✝





# BEAUTIFUL FEET

by Mark R. Hedrick, M.D.

*“HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS”*

– ROMANS 10:15



As a foot and ankle orthopaedist, when I reflect on this Scripture passage, it gives me pause. What is so beautiful about feet? In my practice I see plenty, and I can say with conviction that, in general, they are not very beholding to see. Yet Paul, quoting the prophet Isaiah, does describe at least some people's feet as beautiful. What exactly does God mean in this passage, and what makes someone's feet beautiful? It is the feet of a person "who brings good news," putting faith into action by physically going to share with others the gospel message, that makes them indeed beautiful.

On April 7th, in Asheville, North Carolina, we had a wonderful event to promote beautiful feet. Asheville has been a growing "hub" of participation with Scalpel At The Cross over the last few years, and there has been a desire by the board of directors to bring the vision of the mission more





directly to the city and surrounding area. Over 50 people, including physicians, physician's assistants, nurses, a prosthetist, scrub technicians, orthopaedic implant representatives, as well as mission pastors, mission supporters, friends, and family, gathered for a dinner to promote awareness and support for Scalpel At The Cross. Attendees were treated to a great time of conversation and food, followed by presentations from Peggy Gasior, director, and Peter and Nancy Cole, co-founders, of Scalpel At the Cross. Peggy began the evening with the story of her personal journey to become director, followed by Nancy, who gave the history of the Cole family and their vision for medical missions. Peter then presented the keynote message on "The Birth of a Jungle Mission," encapsulating well the mission that is Scalpel At The Cross. Chuck Archerd, co-host of the event, ended the evening with a message of encouragement towards support and participation.

Many seeds were planted for involvement with Scalpel At The Cross mission trips for the future, and God richly blessed the event! We look forward with great anticipation to see how He will work in the lives of those who attended to bring more beautiful feet to the jungles of Peru. ✝



## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Thank you for your ongoing prayers for this leadership team as they faithfully and prayerfully serve the mission.*



PETER A. COLE, M.D.  
President and Co-Founder



NANCY E. COLE  
Director of Halo Ministries &  
Prayer Posse and Co-Founder



ROBERT R. KORLIJAN  
Chief Financial Officer



PEGGY T. GASIOR  
Chief Operating Officer and  
Mission Director



JASON J. CARON, M.D.  
Director of Patient Care &  
E-Consults



DANIELLE C. ELLERBE  
Member and Trip Leader



MARK R. HEDRICK, M.D.  
Member



DEREK L. EITREIM  
Member

*"Grateful for a strong TEAM willing to wrestle minds, slay obstacles, and prayerfully draw down on fresh solutions to emerging needs of our hospitals and patients in the Peruvian Amazon."*

*-Peter A. Cole*

The Scalpel At The Cross Board of Directors is committed to meeting approximately every nine months to review ongoing activity, strategize for the future, and ensure the commitment to our mission and vision. Board meetings are held in home cities of each board member on a rotating basis, and we just wrapped up an invigorating and productive meeting in Boston, Massachusetts.



"Looking Back, Looking Forward" Session



Meeting at Bentley University



Beautiful Boston



# ON BEHALF OF THE PRAYER POSSE

by Nancy E. Cole

Our devoted Prayer Posse is thrilled beyond measure to share that God broke through seemingly impassable circumstances on several occasions during this past February's medical campaign in Peru; we share specifically about how He broke through two of the most challenging. A medical tote carrying hip implants that were essential for hip replacement surgeries was both lost and found by the airlines; and, thanks to a Peruvian attorney friend and brother in the Lord, finally cleared customs just in time to get those surgeries completed. As a result, four patients are now ambulating with greater facility and ease, coupled with 17 others who presented with traumatic injuries and on whom we were able to offer excellent operative care!! Additionally, when our team was faced with the hardship of a broken autoclave (surgical sterilizing machine) without which we could not operate, we were able to utilize one from a neighboring hospital until ours got up and running. It was not a smooth process, mind you,

but it got the job done!!! Again, thanks be to God for these precious faith-building gifts and for the commitment of a Prayer Posse that simply would not take "no" for an answer to these impasses!

We are also indebted to one of our board members and two friends of the ministry from Asheville, NC, who undertook the task of hosting a beautiful dinner benefit for Scalpel at the Biltmore Forest Country Club in early April (see "Beautiful Feet" in this issue). What a spread!!! We prayed, and God answered to the tune of 50+ in attendance with whom we were able to share our vision and hope.

We are currently bending the knee in thanksgiving for a successful Scalpel board meeting in Boston, MA, late April, and in anticipation of a team trip to Peru in July that will be under the leadership of Peter Cole, MD, and daughter, Dani. Pray for Dani as she debuts in this capacity without the assistance of Peggy Gasior, under whom she has shadowed three times over the course of this past year. There

is a small constituency from Calvary Church in St. Paul who will be coming alongside this team to serve in both medical and non-medical ways...and we greatly look forward to their partnership.

Lastly, we have successfully sent a 40' shipping container (replete with large ticket medical items such as x-ray/fluoroscopy machines, hospital beds, etc.), which arrived into Lima on April 23, 2018. We are praying for the container to clear customs as smoothly as possible. Once we have been assured of clearance through customs and the send-off to Pucallpa, a small Scalpel team will fly down to receive and distribute the items alongside the staff and community at Hospital Amazonico. There are many elements to this container shipment where the enemy would be more than pleased to run interference. Pray that everything will get into the hands of those it is being sent to help, and that the logistical concerns will be kept at bay. †

## DR. JOHN F. WECHTER

*Created this beautiful piece of art after reflecting on his second trip with Scalpel At The Cross in February of this year. Dr. Wechter is an orthopaedic surgeon and one of Dr. Cole's former residents referenced in, "Setting Fires," also in this issue.*



# 2017 SATC MISSION VITALS



**3 TRIPS**  
FEB, AUG, NOV

**\$76,940**

VALUE OF SUPPLIES



**33 TEAM**  
MEMBERS

**\$92,789**

DONATED TIME OF PERSONNEL

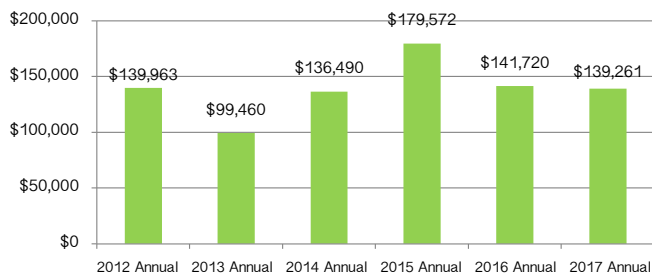


**48 SURGICAL**  
PATIENTS

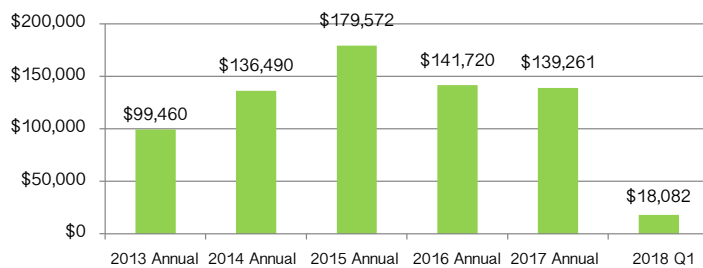
**\$419,500**

ESTIMATED VALUE OF MEDICAL CARE

Annual Summary\*  
2011-2017



Annual Summary\*  
2012-2018 Q1



*please support our mission*

Online giving is easy and convenient at:  
[giving.ncsservices.org/scalpelatthecross](http://giving.ncsservices.org/scalpelatthecross)

or contact us at:  
P.O. Box 558436  
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[www.scalpelatthecross.org](http://www.scalpelatthecross.org)  
305-926-5746