

## Happy Autumn!

With autumn starting in the Northern Hemisphere, it is time for the quarterly update from the Open Medical Institute. What an exciting summer it has been! While the opera camps at Schloss Arenberg provided an unparalleled experience to musically inclined kids, we took our first step in Southeast Asia and kicked off the OMI Vietnam seminar series. With three operating hubs in Austria, Mexico, and Vietnam, the OMI has expanded its global footprint and extended opportunities to an even broader community. Our autumn newsletter is packed full of program updates, season highlights, and event announcements. Curious to learn more? Take a moment to read and enjoy!



## OMI Expands Its Focus Toward Southeast Asia

Imagine a world where access to quality healthcare is not a privilege, but a standard. At the OMI, we are working towards making that a reality. Recognizing that a skilled health workforce is the backbone of every healthcare system, we support free and equitable access to education and training for doctors from developing countries. This July, we took a major step forward and expanded into Southeast Asia. Thanks to Weill Cornell Medicine (Anesthesiology, Critical Care, and Pulmonology) and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (Pediatric Emergency Medicine) for providing the academic leadership, as well as to VinUniversity for hosting us at the superb Hanoi campus facilities. The 60 participants from all parts of Vietnam, Laos, Indonesia, Nepal, and the Philippines were exceptionally bright, enthusiastic,

and welcoming. The Institut Pasteur in Paris will also contribute expertise to this most worthwhile endeavor by sending experts to Ho Chi Minh City in mid-November for the first OMI Vietnam global health seminar.

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### **Small Bite, Big Threat: Vector-Borne Disease Experts Gather in Salzburg**

Almost everyone has been bitten by a mosquito, a tick, or a flea. With just one bite, these small organisms can transmit serious diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, Zika, leishmaniasis, Lyme disease, yellow fever, or Japanese encephalitis. Diseases spread by vectors are some of the most common and deadly ones in the world today. They cause more than 700,000 deaths every year and more than half of the world's population is at risk. Besides increasing human population growth, urbanization, globalization, trade exchange, travel, and close interactions with livestock, researchers have attributed climate change to be a major cause of rising levels of vector-borne diseases. In the first week of September, the OMI was fortunate to have hosted Dr. Anna-Bella Failloux from the Institut Pasteur, Paris, along with some of the world's top experts in the field to train the next generation of doctors and scientists.

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## **OMI Addresses Global Disparities in Neurosurgical Care**

“As physicians privileged to work at an academic institution in North America, I have always felt that it is our responsibility to teach and train surgeons from less developed regions,” says Dr. Roger Härtl, Hansen-MacDonald Professor of Neurological Surgery and Director of Neurosurgery Spine at the Weill Cornell Medicine Brain and Spine Center in New York. “The OMI has a perfect set-up and approach to efficiently train the future leaders in medicine. It’s been one of the highlights of my career to come to Salzburg and contribute to this program.” While advancements in neurosurgical techniques and technologies have significantly improved patient outcomes in developed countries, the same cannot be said for developing countries. Neurosurgeons in these regions face numerous challenges in providing adequate care: A severe shortage of specialists, limited resources and infrastructure, lack of continuous learning and professional development, and substantial brain drain that depletes the pool of neurosurgical talent. Efforts to improve neurosurgical care must include training and education programs for aspiring neurosurgeons. In September, the OMI dedicated two seminar weeks to brain and spine disorders. Paired with elite faculty, 68 young specialists from 37 countries learned through theoretical sessions and refined their surgical skills during cadaver labs and simulation training.

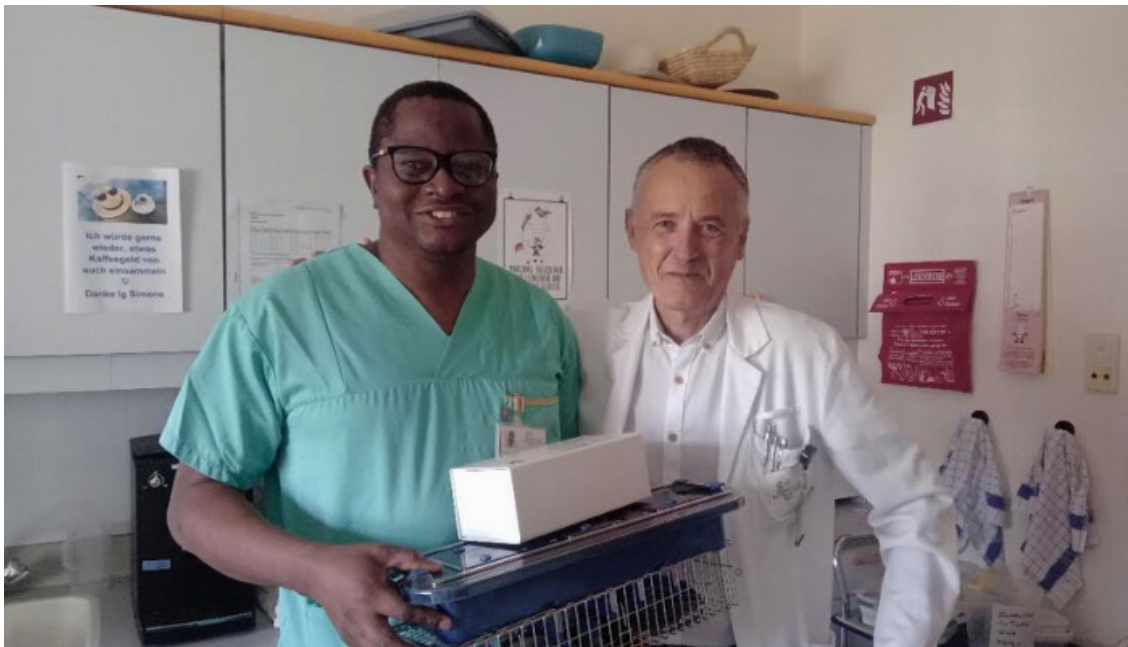
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## **OMI Brings Palliative Care Specialists to Greece**

For the first time in the history of the Salzburg end-of-life care program, the 2022 cohort included healthcare professionals from Greece. This was repeated in August 2023 and throughout both courses, the Greek fellows demonstrated their strong commitment to improve the care of adults and children with serious illnesses in their home country. Knowing the desperate need for education about palliative care in Greece, they, with the help of the OMI, organized a three-day symposium for doctors and nurses at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens from September 4 to 6, 2023. They invited the OMI faculty – Betty Ferrell, Carrie L. Cormack, Patrick J. Coyne, Nicoleta Mitrea, and Judith A. Paice – to teach along with local faculty who had previously trained in Salzburg. The feedback was extremely positive with attendees promising to implement and disseminate the information learned. The influence of this training in Athens will be long-lasting and illustrates the OMI’s global impact in advancing healthcare education.

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## **OMI Engages in Pediatric Urological Education in Nigeria**

The need for pediatric urological care in Sub-Saharan Africa is enormous due to a rapidly growing pediatric-aged population and a disproportionate burden of congenital malformations. There are critical challenges in the provision of a skilled workforce and appropriate infrastructure. OMI fellow Dr. Collins Chijioke Adumah is one of four pediatric surgeons working at the Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex in Ile-Ife, Nigeria, an OMI partner institution. Though the hospital sees some 800 children with urological conditions annually, it does not have a single specialized pediatric doctor. During his recent one-month OMI observership at the Sisters of Mercy Hospital in Linz, Dr. Adumah received specific pediatric urological training. Currently, he is working on the development of a sub-specialization program in pediatric urology in Nigeria. Dr. Adumah will be back in Salzburg in the spring of 2024 to continue his training. This is a wonderful example of global health done right!

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## **OMI MEX Takes on Virology and Urology**

Clinicians and researchers from Mexico, Canada, Brazil, and Uruguay gathered in Mexico City in July to learn from Dr. Jean-Pierre Vartanian and expert Institut Pasteur faculty about Viruses, Liver, and Cancers. After a short summer break, the OMI MEX seminars kicked off again in September with the ESU/ Weill Cornell Seminar in Urology, in which world-renowned urologists Dr. Jonathan A. Coleman and Dr. Joan Palou Redorta led the course. With such a dynamic and diverse group of faculty and fellows, we know that participants gained a plethora of knowledge and inspiration by learning from the best.

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## **OMI Promotes Children’s Health Across the Globe**

When you ask pediatric emergency medicine physician Dr. Archana Verma about her motivation to teach at the OMI, she will tell you that she is dedicated to sharing knowledge with doctors from all parts of the world. She often learns just as much as she teaches from each group of dynamic fellows. Passionate about pediatrics and eager to make a difference in the world, Dr. Verma along with Dr. James M. Callahan, OMI Deputy CEO and Medical Director of CHOP’s Global Pediatric Education Program, became the first two faculty members to travel to all three OMI hubs – Salzburg, Mexico City, and Hanoi – to provide free, top-level pediatric emergency medicine education. The OMI faculty are the heart of the program, its greatest asset. Not only are they experts in their field, but they are philanthropically minded and willing to share their time and expertise. Their dedication, commitment, and tireless efforts shape the unique education the OMI offers in Austria, Mexico, Vietnam, and far beyond.

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## **Don't Miss Out on 2024 OMI Seminars!**

Are you looking for a unique opportunity to enhance your knowledge and skills? Join motivated colleagues from around the world for a one-week course in your medical specialty. The OMI seminars take place at Schloss Arenberg in Salzburg, Austria. They consist of state-of-the-art lectures, case presentations, workshops, and hands-on training. Leading experts from our partner institutions in the United States and Europe are enthusiastic to share their expertise with you. The application deadline for all OMI seminars that take place from January through May of 2024 is October 31, 2023. We look forward to receiving your application soon!

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## **A New Piano at Schloss Arenberg to Honor the Memory of Donald G. Tober**

When you think of Salzburg, the mind conjures snow-capped mountains with nuns dancing atop alpine meadows and singing with outstretched arms. While this is not a daily occurrence, the magic of Salzburg as captured in the iconic film *The Sound of Music* is alive and well, and the city is a must-visit for classical music fans. A highlight of each seminar week at Schloss Arenberg is the Thursday evening chamber music concert, where faculty and fellows are fully immersed in the world of classical music. With the generous support of AAF board member Barbara Tober, in memory of her beloved husband, Donald G. Tober, we are delighted to continue this highly valued tradition. In August, Mrs. Tober commemorated Donald's love of music by donating a Steinway Grand Piano to Schloss Arenberg, the centerpiece of the newly named Donald G. Tober Faculty Lounge. Mr. Tober, an accomplished pianist, embraced the arts, and we are beyond grateful for this generous gift which will bring the joy of music to the global community we serve.

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**Gala Wiener Schule der Medizin**  
Vienna  
October 16, 2023

**30 Years of OMI**  
Salzburg  
November 29, 2023

**AAF Music for Medicine**  
New York  
December 4, 2023

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# SAVE THE DATES

## Save the Dates!

Mark your calendars! The OMI is hosting three events this fall. The first, on October 16, 2023, is the Gala of the Wiener Schule der Medizin in Vienna, focusing on historical milestones, major innovations, and the opportunities and risks of AI in orthopedics. This year, the Open Medical Institute is celebrating its 30th anniversary. To honor this milestone, Schloss Arenberg in Salzburg will open its doors to friends and donors on November 29, 2023. The annual AAF Music for Medicine benefit will highlight this important milestone as well. The anniversary celebration will take place on December 4, 2023, in New York City. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Yours sincerely,



**Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky**  
CEO | Open Medical Institute  
A Program of the American Austrian Foundation

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Contact:

Salzburg Stiftung der American Austrian Foundation (AAF) | Open Medical Institute  
Schloss Arenberg | Arenbergstrasse 10 | 5020 Salzburg | Austria  
[www.openmedicalinstitute.org](http://www.openmedicalinstitute.org) | [seminars@openmedicalinstitute.org](mailto:seminars@openmedicalinstitute.org)