

Surgeon in Burundi wins \$500,000 medical missionary prize

%1 in the [January 18, 2017](#) issue

Jason Fader, one of a dozen surgeons serving the nation of Burundi, won the first-ever Gerson L'Chaim Prize for Outstanding Christian Medical Missionary Service.

The \$500,000 prize is given by the African Mission Healthcare Foundation, which supports medical missionaries and mission hospitals. The president is Jon Fielder, a medical missionary in Kenya, who founded the organization with his friend Mark Gerson, an entrepreneur and author.

“Dr. Fader and his team are a link in a string of unsung heroes,” Gerson said in a statement.

Fader and his wife, Heather, who are both 1999 graduates of Calvin College, serve with Serge, a nondenominational Reformed agency previously called World Harvest Mission. Fader’s parents were also medical missionaries, serving in Kenya.

During medical training in Ann Arbor, Michigan, they met two other families at Knox Presbyterian Church and formed a medical missions team, according to their blog, mccropders.com.

The team moved to Burundi in 2013, making a multidecade commitment there. They serve as the clinical faculty for Hope Africa University’s medical school, and Fader is assistant medical director for Kibuye Hope Hospital, a 100-bed hospital.

“Hundreds of people will walk because of this prize, thousands will receive care, and tens of thousands will be helped by the doctors we will train here in Burundi,” Fader said in a video.

Fader plans to use the prize money to complete a new ward at the hospital, to buy orthopedic equipment for surgeries on fractures, and to expand laboratories at the medical school.

“Our 30-year strategic plan envisions this place becoming a national center of medical care and education,” the team wrote on its blog. “Maybe this will come to pass through us. Maybe in spite of us. Certainly it’s a task for which we are

insufficient in our own strength and capacities.”