

Dr. Ryan Horazdovsky and Dr. Scott Marston, along with their families, set out on a follow up trip to Zimbabwe, Africa from July 24 to August 10, 2014. Dr. Horazdovsky had been there the previous year introducing the SIGN system to the teaching hospitals in Harare as well as to the mission hospital in Karanda. Based on the comments from the teaching staff in Harare and the surgeon in Karanda, both programs have been very successful and life changing for a multitude of patients that would have otherwise had their fractures managed in traction or a cast.

Dr. Marston is an assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery at Regions Hospital in St. Paul, MN, which is a level 1 trauma center and associated with the University of Minnesota. He specializes in Adult Reconstruction and orthopaedic trauma. Dr. Horazdovsky spent the past year as the fellow in the combined Adult Recon/Trauma Fellowship at Regions Hospital under Dr. Marston. While at Regions, Dr. Horazdovsky introduced the SIGN nail to the orthopaedic trauma surgeons and he and Dr. Marston began using this for treatment of long bone fractures.

This experience with the SIGN nail proved to be invaluable while working in Africa. Dr. Horazdovsky and Marston were able to treat six long bone fractures with the SIGN system, two tibial shaft fractures, one of which was a non-union, three femoral shaft fractures, one of which was a non-union and one a segmental fracture and one humeral shaft fracture non-union.

In addition to these six cases, they were able to perform a total of 21 orthopaedic surgeries while at the mission hospital in Karanda, one of which was a total hip replacement on one of the nurses there who had advanced arthritis from avascular necrosis.

The two surgeons also spent two days working with the residents and teaching staff in Harare, Zimbabwe. There they put on a mini total hip arthroplasty camp. Over the course of the two days, they were able to perform six total hip replacements for patients who otherwise would not be able to afford this treatment. The implants used were donated by Stryker and the cement used was donated by Zimmer and Stryker.

While the Horazdovsky and Marston families were getting some well-deserved rest at Victoria Falls, the orthopaedic residents and their staff back in Harare were able to perform another four total hip replacements. This experience with joint replacement and seeing the need for this life changing surgery for patients with advanced hip arthritis have inspired Dr. Horazdovsky and Dr. Marston to further explore options for developing total hip implants to be used for the underprivileged.