

# CMDA St. Louis September Update



Ice Cream Social

Washu Med's ice cream social is the biggest event of the year. The purpose is to both befriend first year students, and to see old friends. I had the privilege of meeting several first years who were excitedly asking the older students questions about what to expect. It was an extremely well attended event.

When only a few students remained and all the ice cream was cleaned up, a student arrived carrying his suitcase behind him. "Did you just get off the plane?" I asked, surprised. "Yes," he said plainly, "I flew from New York, and before that, Malaysia." I lit up with excitement as he told me this, because this summer I worked with international students in New Jersey for a five week mission trip. Several who we worked closest with were Malaysian students! I explained this to him, also adding that these Malaysian students were Christians (only 9% of Malaysia is Christian). His eyes widened as I told him of my Malaysian friends. I am so thankful for the way God weaves together our experiences to bring Him glory!

Around 30 students gathered at the top floor of a library on Washu Med's campus to attend the first CMDA meeting of the year. Our student leaders did a great job engaging both familiar faces and first year students about their anticipation of the upcoming year. A Washu Professor, Dr. Swamidass, was invited to speak. "God has a purpose for you everywhere." He stated, "You're not here for yourself. [Medical school] is all about you, but God wants to reach the world through you guys."

During the time Dr. Swamidass spoke, we were invited to learn about the legacy of Christian physicians who have come before us. I'm confident students left feeling inspired in their faith, and affirmed in Christianity's intellectual integrity.

## GRACE PRESCRIPTIONS

The vision of CMDA is to transform the whole medical community by God's grace, and that's why we are excited about Grace Prescriptions. This is a study designed to teach you to share your faith with patients in ways that safeguard the important ethical principles of respect, sensitivity and permission. All healthcare workers are welcome to join. Dinner and childcare will be provided. Meetings will begin October 5th from 6pm-8:30pm.

<http://www.wcag.org/graceprescriptions.html>

## Joining a Legacy



First Meeting of the Year

## Physician's Corner



Dr. Paul Glaser

I had been the psychiatrist for "Moe" over eight years when he asked me. At 52 years old, shy and quiet, Moe already walked with a cane. He rarely looked up at anyone when he came to his appointments. He had black hair that he let purposefully grow long in front to cover his eyes. It would take him minutes to get up and move to the office room due to the mysterious crippling RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy) that had taken over his hands and feet over 20 years ago after a work related accident that he never got fully compensated for due to his passive nature. I treated his depression and schizophrenia regularly, taking time to listen even if I made no changes to his medications. So after all those years, I am sure he looked to me as a friend as well as a doctor, mainly because he did not talk to other people. His paranoia did not make it very easy to trust others, so he stayed inside except for doctor appointments.

Although we had not talked of faith much for over eight years, he carefully asked me that day, "Hey doc, things are getting really bad in the news and the economy. This world is crazy, you know? How do I know if I die soon, if I will go to heaven? I mean, I want to be in heaven with my mama (Kentucky for grandma). She was a good lady and always prayed. And I want to be baptized. Mama always told me I need to be baptized to go to heaven. I can tell you a religious man doc, can you help me?" Trust me, I did not start a theological argument about whether or not baptism was needed for salvation. Instead, I walked through the basic beliefs of the Gospel. He expressed his faith and wanted Jesus as his savior. We prayed together. I asked him if there was a local church that he could go to get baptized. He simply said, "Doc, you know I can't go up in front of no bunch of strangers. Can you baptize me here?" I told him I would look into it. After getting permission from my pastor to conduct my first baptism, and gathering some Holy Water from my catholic nurse, I baptized him at his next appointment. I poured part of the water over his head as I called on the triune God to bless this man and his simple faith. I will always remember the peaceful smile on his face, the tears running down his cheeks, and seeing him direct his face upwards for the only time that I ever had seen. I gave him the bottle that had a picture of Jesus on it. In later appointments, he would always thank me repeatedly for the bottle of holy water, since he said he would bring it out and hold it when he prayed.

Moe still needed his medications after this and still complained of the never-ending pain, but his countenance was always lighter from that day on. Moe now had hope. Hope to join his mama in heaven, and hope to worship God without pain or paranoia someday together with his psychiatrist who had prayed for him, just like his mama.

Rachel Johnson | [rachel.anne.johnson@cru.org](mailto:rachel.anne.johnson@cru.org) | 314.833.0661