

Insights

March 2025



Ohana One's Peter Ronah is training Dr. Derrick Mukuruci, a resident plastic surgeon at St. Mary's Hospital in Lacor, Uganda on how to utilize the technology donated by Ohana One. Photo courtesy of Kelly Fogel Photography.

As we step into another impactful season at Ohana One, I am deeply inspired by the dedication of our partners, volunteers, and supporters. From our participation in the Pan-African Surgical Conference to our life-changing outreach trip in Uganda, we continue to bridge critical gaps in surgical education and care. The partnerships we are forging—like our collaboration with Rwanda's first microsurgeon, Dr. Ian Shyala—demonstrate the power of mentorship and innovation in transforming healthcare systems.

In this issue, we also share insights from our sustainability efforts, highlighting how virtual surgical training is not only expanding access but also significantly reducing our environmental footprint. Additionally, our upcoming Guatemala Surgical Outreach Trip and the upcoming launch of the OO App mark exciting new chapters in our mission to empower medical professionals worldwide.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support fuels our work, ensuring that more patients receive the care they deserve. I invite you to explore the stories and initiatives in this newsletter—together, we are making a difference.

Warmly,

Marchelle Sellers
Executive Director



[DONATE TODAY!](#)



Photo courtesy of Peter Ronah.

Pan-African Surgical Conference 2025

The Pan-African Surgical Conference serves as a vital platform for healthcare professionals and policymakers to develop strategies to strengthen Africa's surgical workforce and improve access to surgical care. Ohana One was honored to be part of this transformative event, leveraging our expertise, technology, and partnerships to advance surgical mentorship across the continent. Throughout the conference, Peter Ronah, Ohana One's Biomedical Engineer, Technical Support & African Field Coordinator, played a pivotal role in forging connections, introducing innovative surgical technology, and exploring new avenues for surgical education and mentorship.

One of the most significant collaborations solidified at the conference was with Dr. Ian Shyala, Rwanda's first microsurgeon. His pioneering work in Plastic and Reconstructive Microsurgery at Rwanda Military Hospital is setting new standards for surgical care in the region. Ohana One is thrilled to collaborate with SHARE, a program of The Plastic Surgery Foundation, to support Dr. Shyala's efforts by donating Smart Glasses equipped with TeleVU software. This technology enables real-time, hands-on mentorship, bridging surgical training gaps and expanding access to high-quality care.

Our outreach extended beyond Rwanda to Ethiopia, where Dr. Abraham Nigusie, a leading Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon, is spearheading efforts to build resilient and sustainable surgical services across the country. During the conference, Peter engaged with Dr. Nigusie, who shared his ambitious vision of ensuring a surgeon in every district hospital.

[Read the full story here.](#)



Uganda Surgical Outreach Trip

Ohana One's recent medical outreach in Uganda was a life-changing mission that provided critical surgical care, advanced medical training, and much-needed equipment donations to underserved communities. In collaboration with Pipeline Worldwide and local partners, a dedicated team of 20 volunteers traveled to Kampala, Gulu, and Moyo to make a lasting impact. Over the course of the trip, the team performed 36 surgeries on 38 patients, conducted 50 medical consultations, and donated over \$75,000 worth of medical equipment to support local healthcare facilities.

Beyond the surgical procedures, the mission focused on long-term improvements in patient care. Hospital staff received advanced training in ultrasound and videolaryngoscope techniques, as well as surgical preparation methods to ensure medications remain easily accessible during procedures. The team also restored a long-defunct C-Arm X-ray machine at Lacor Hospital, bringing back a vital diagnostic tool for the region. To further enhance medical education, local surgeons were introduced to Smart Glasses technology, allowing them to receive real-time guidance and continue learning long after the team's departure.

The outreach was not only about medical care but also about the people it touched. Families traveled for hours—sometimes days—on boda bodas (motorcycle taxis) to ensure their loved ones could receive treatment. Patients like Lola, Geoffrey, and Elizabeth, who suffered from severe burn contractures and other conditions, received transformative surgeries that restored movement and changed the course of their lives. The mission reinforced the importance of holistic healing, with even small moments of joy, such as visits from Kiki the clown, helping patients and families find comfort in difficult times.

This initiative was made possible by the generosity of donors and partners, including Americas, MAP International, and MTF Biologics, which contributed over \$70,000 in medical supplies. The trip demonstrated the power of collaboration between international medical experts, local surgeons, and community volunteers, all working together to bring sustainable healthcare solutions to Uganda.

[Read the full report here.](#)



Clean Consulting Update

Ohana One partnered with UCLA's Clean Consulting team for an in-depth analysis of its environmental impact and to develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy. The Spring 2024 Clean Consulting Project focused on identifying and reducing carbon emissions, creating an electronic waste recycling plan, and evaluating the viability of carbon offsets.

The project technology conducted an external audit of Ohana One's operations, including mission trip travel, medical technology use, and virtual surgical education. By calculating emissions from flights, smart glasses, and energy use, they identified key areas for reduction. One of the most impactful findings highlighted that Ohana One's virtual surgical training programs saved 564.87 metric tons of CO₂ in 2023 alone, significantly reducing the need for international travel.

The project provided sustainable travel recommendations to minimize emissions from mission trips, including prioritizing direct flights, utilizing airlines with sustainable aviation fuel initiatives, and promoting public transportation for travel to and from airports. Additionally, an e-waste recycling guide was developed to ensure responsible disposal of used smart glasses and electronic medical equipment.

A critical evaluation of carbon credits determined that purchasing offsets was not the most effective strategy for Ohana One. Instead, the report recommended direct investments in sustainability initiatives that align more closely with the organization's mission.

Moving forward, Ohana One will update its Sustainability Statement, and explore ways to refine emissions tracking for surgical procedures. By adopting these sustainable practices, Ohana One continues to set an example of how technology-driven medical education can reduce environmental impact while expanding access to surgical training worldwide.



From Los Angeles to Mozambique, Sri Lanka to Kenya to Bangladesh - Ohana One's Surgical Sight Program brings mentors and mentees together in real time.

Ohana One in 38 Seconds

Ohana One's Surgical Sessions Library is a groundbreaking collection of videos recorded using Ohana One Smart Glasses, Cam Vu, and other technologies that enable surgeons to collaborate in real time, record surgeries, consults, and more. These videos highlight procedures across 16 specialties and from over 50 countries, offering a unique, immersive learning experience for surgeons worldwide.

Surgeries featured in the library include laparoscopic liver resection, appendectomy, cystoscopy, and many more. By sharing real-world surgical insights, Ohana One is transforming global surgical education and expanding access to critical knowledge. The above video is a sample of some of this amazing library.



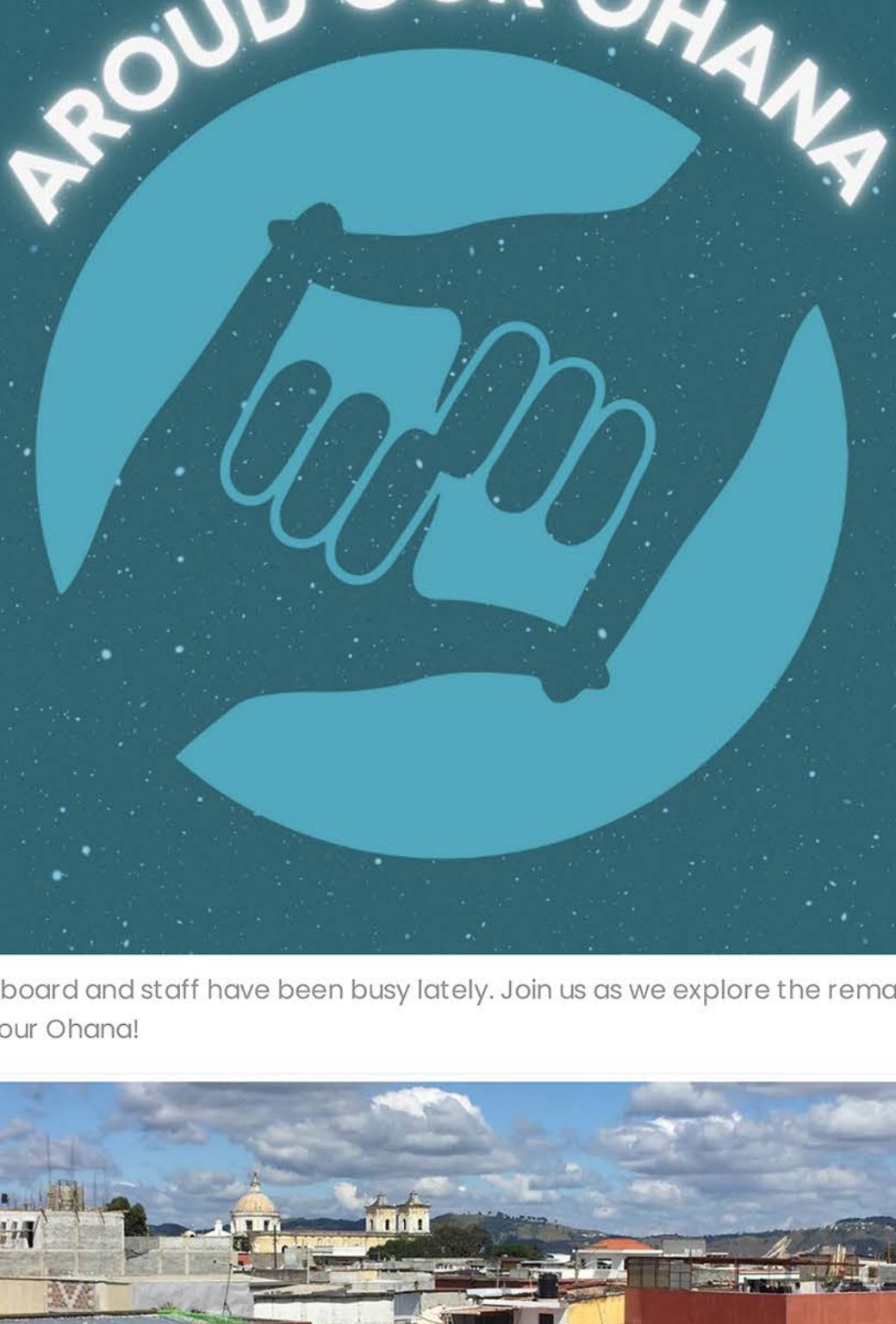
Relevance of Ohana One to the Pediatric Surgical Community in Africa

More than 1.7 billion children worldwide lack access to essential surgical care, with the greatest disparities in low- and middle-income countries. In Africa, where 42% of the population are children, a severe shortage of pediatric surgeons leads to devastating outcomes. The continent has the lowest number of specialist surgeons globally, with just 0.5 per 100,000 residents compared to Europe's 36.2.

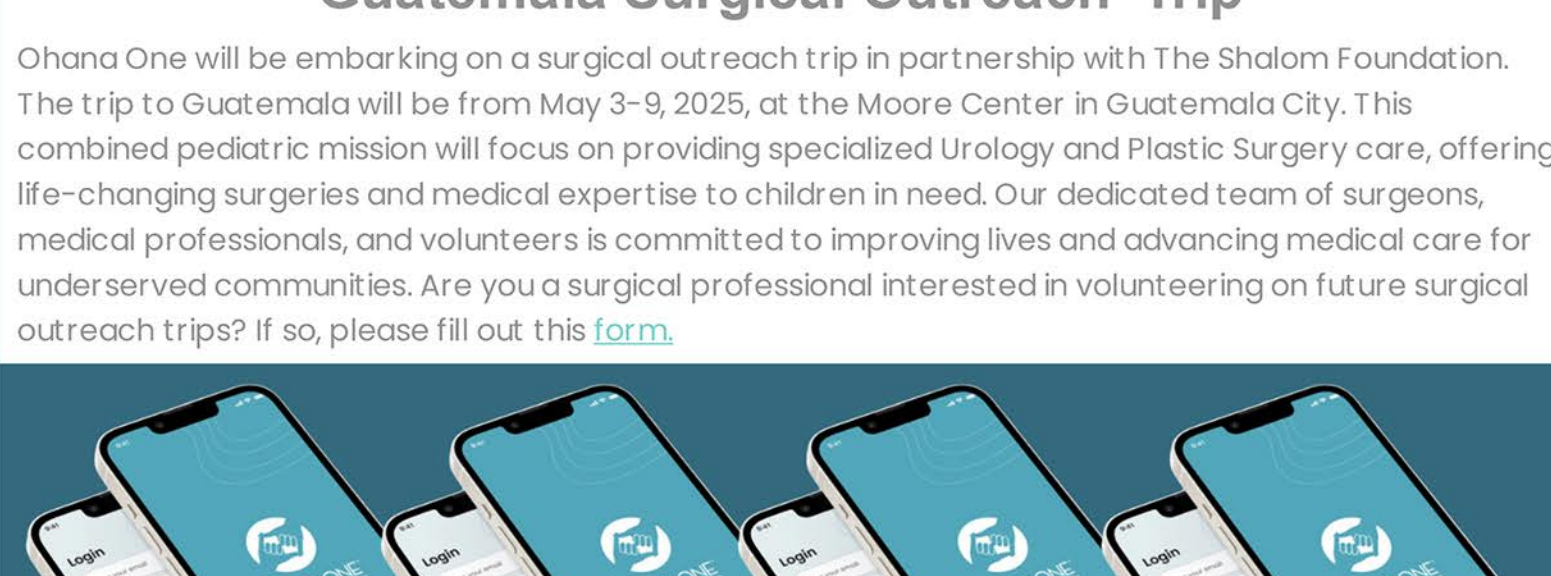
This shortage translates into tragic consequences for vulnerable patients. For example, gastrochisis surgery—a life-saving procedure for infants—has a 2% mortality rate in high-income countries but a staggering 75.5% in sub-Saharan Africa. The outcomes for childhood cancer treatments and trauma care are even worse, despite the dedication and ingenuity of local surgeons working with limited resources.

Expanding access to advanced surgical training is essential to improving survival rates. Studies show that increasing the number of trained pediatric surgeons significantly boosts surgical success. However, traditional training and outreach models often fail in regions where mentorship opportunities are limited. A scalable, accessible approach to specialist education is critical to closing this gap.

Read more about the urgent need for scalable, accessible surgical education [here](#).

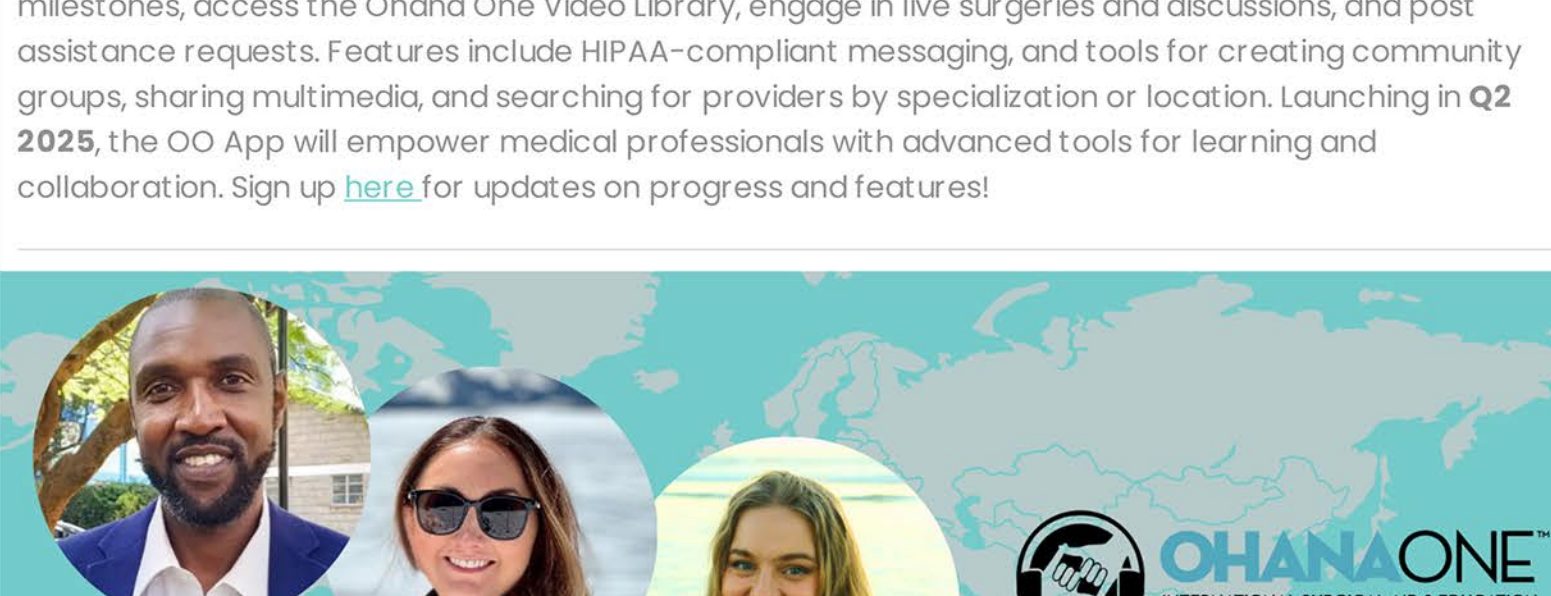


The Ohana One board and staff have been busy lately. Join us as we explore the remarkable initiatives unfolding within our Ohana!



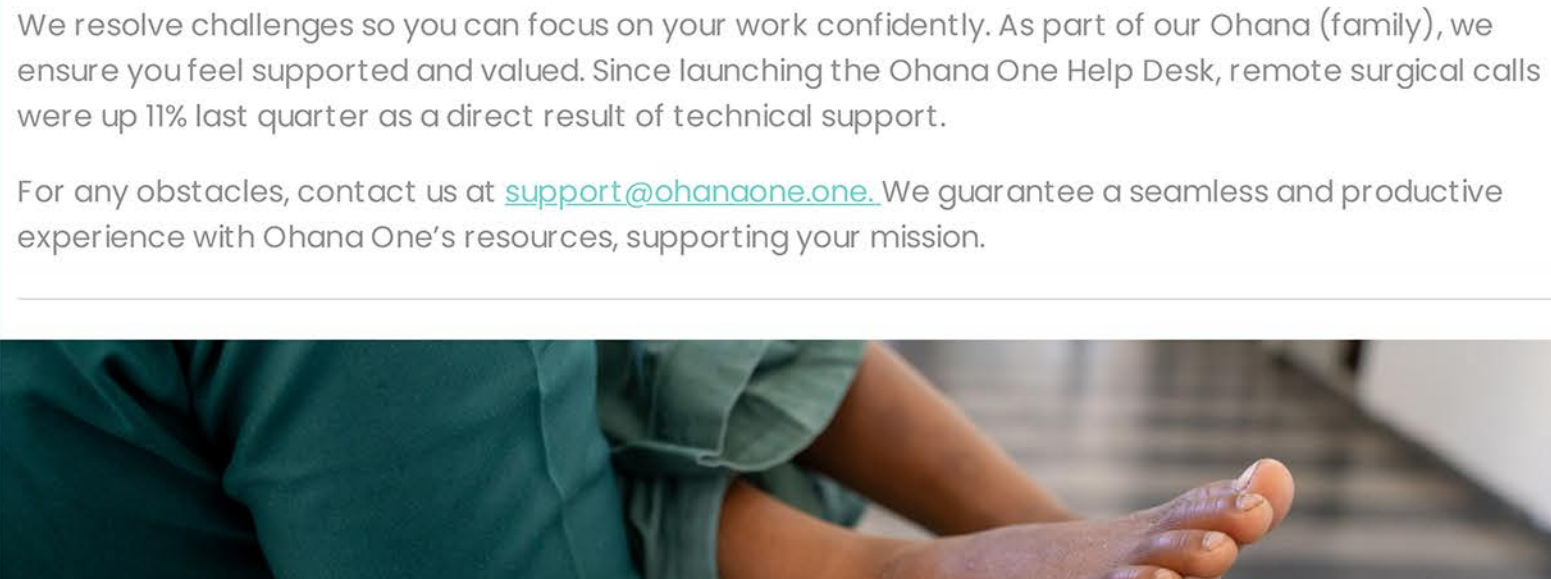
Guatemala Surgical Outreach Trip

Ohana One will be embarking on a surgical outreach trip in partnership with The Shalom Foundation. The trip to Guatemala will be from May 3-9, 2025, at the Moore Center in Guatemala City. This combined pediatric mission will focus on providing specialized Urology and Plastic Surgery care, offering life-changing surgeries and medical expertise to children in need. Our dedicated team of surgeons, medical professionals, and volunteers is committed to improving lives and advancing medical care for underserved communities. Are you a surgical professional interested in volunteering on future surgical outreach trips? If so, please fill out this [form](#).



The OO App

The **OO App** will revolutionize how surgeons connect and collaborate. Users can track educational milestones, access the Ohana One Video Library, engage in live surgeries and discussions, and post assistance requests. Features include HIPAA-compliant messaging, and tools for creating community groups, sharing multimedia, and searching for providers by specialization or location. Launching in **Q2 2025**, the OO App will empower medical professionals with advanced tools for learning and collaboration. Sign up [here](#) for updates on progress and features!



Ohana One's Help Desk

Ohana One's Help Desk empowers our teams, surgeons, mentors, and partners by addressing technical and training needs. Our team, Grace Berlin, Bevin Metzger, and Peter Ronah, provide solutions for software, hardware, login issues, and training requests. Peter is based in Kenya and available to offer in-person support throughout Africa.

We resolve challenges so you can focus on your work confidently. As part of our Ohana (family), we ensure you feel supported and valued. Since launching the Ohana One Help Desk, remote surgical calls were up 11% last quarter as a direct result of technical support.

For any obstacles, contact us at support@ohanaone.one. We guarantee a seamless and productive experience with Ohana One's resources, supporting your mission.

DONATE

