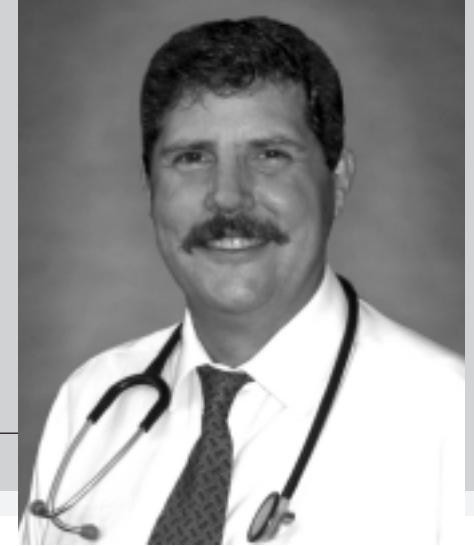




## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Perry Jansen '91g



### To Dr. Perry Jansen for his work in fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Malawi and improving the quality of life and restoring hope for that country's citizens.

It was Perry Jansen's sense of adventure that led him to Penn State's College of Medicine in Hershey, Pa. "Having grown up in Southern California, my wife and I wanted to experience a different part of the country," he said.

A taste for adventure, his faith, and a desperate need for physicians would ultimately lead him to Malawi, a country of 12 million in Southern Africa. There, he has worked for the last seven years treating patients in a country where HIV/AIDS incidence in adults, and the resulting deaths, has orphaned nearly one million children.

As a psychology major at Cal State-Long Beach, Jansen aspired to be a marriage and family therapist. But while working as an X-ray technician for orthopedic surgeons he decided to pursue a career in medicine instead.

"My plan was to become an orthopedic surgeon," he said, "but during my clinical

years in med school I realized the schedule was not very conducive to family life and I enjoyed the diversity and unique challenges of family practice."

During college, Jansen had married Brenda, whom he'd known since he was a teenager, and they'd had their first child, Mallory, during medical school. Mallory, who was born with a complex congenital heart defect, endured seven major surgeries in seven years, including heart reconstruction and a heart transplant at age 6. She died when she was 7.

"Mallory's death taught us that life does not always go as we would choose and suffering is part of life," Jansen reflects on that difficult time. It also strengthened their faith. "It was Mallory's life and death, more than anything, that prepared us to say 'yes' when God called us to go to Africa," Jansen said.

Before moving to Africa in 2000, Jansen completed his residency in family practice at UCLA-affiliated Santa Monica Hospital and joined the Doctors Clinic, a multi-specialty group practice in Bremerton, Wash. He first visited Malawi in 1999, becoming aware of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which kills 87,000 Malawians

and infects another 100,000 each year. He moved to Malawi's capital, Lilongwe, with his family the following year, running a small community clinic at the Africa Bible College where he developed a passion caring for people living with AIDS. Based on that work, he created the Malawi non-profit Partners in Hope, while friends from a supporting church established the U.S. non-profit, Partners in Malawi. Jansen has instituted a multi-faceted approach to fighting HIV/AIDS in Malawi including education, prevention, clinical care, home-based care, and clinical research. In late 2005, Partners in Hope moved into a new 36,000-square-foot facility where 60 staff members provide care to more than 3,000 patients a month.

One of Jansen's many accomplishments during his time in Malawi has been procuring affordable generic anti-retroviral medications that previously were beyond the reach of most Malawians. Jansen takes no salary from his work in Malawi; his mission is supported entirely by gifts from individuals and churches in the United States. Last July, *Newsweek* magazine awarded Jansen an honorable mention in its *Giving Back Awards*.

The Jansens expanded their family three years ago when they adopted a Malawian girl who had been orphaned.

They and their three children will spend the next year in the United States. Jansen plans to teach or study at UCLA and take the family practice and tropical medicine board exams.

"The year will also give us a chance for some fundraising," he said, "and will give our children a taste of what it's like to be American."

