

PRINT Connection

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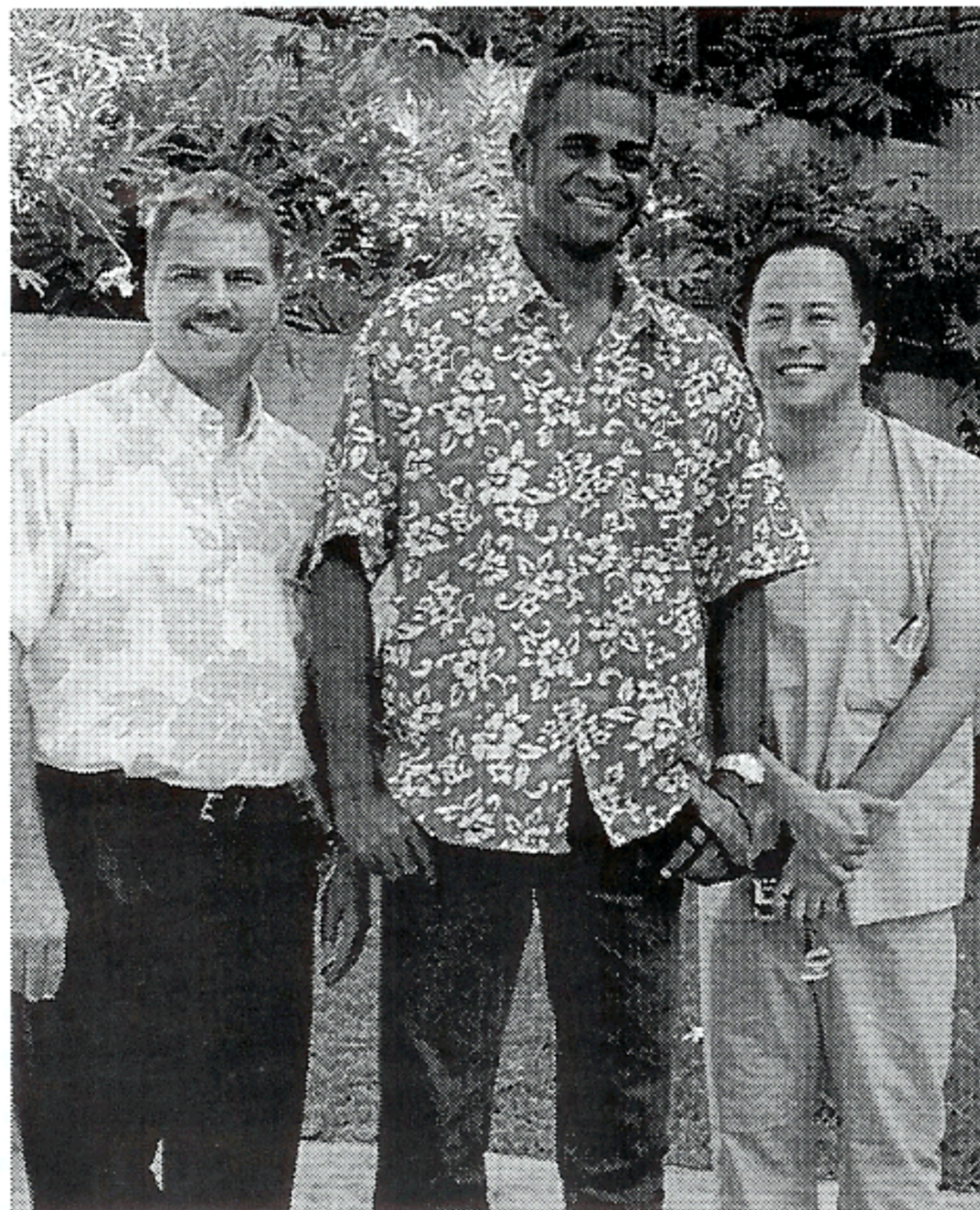
Medical miracles shared with Fijian

Not knowing whether it was a tumor or some other anomaly, Queen's ER doc Mark Magelssen, MD, put his stethoscope up to the man's head near his bulging, swollen eye and heard a rushing noise.

Pursuing his passion for surfing, Dr. Magelssen was vacationing in Fiji, on the island of Tavarua. He had been attending a church service in a village called Nambila when one of the children brought him his impromptu patient, Napolioni Qoro (pronounced goro). The 25-year-old school teacher had been hit with a knee while playing rugby some months ago. After spending two and a half months in a Fiji hospital, he was discharged with 20/2400 vision in his left eye—without hope that it would return to normal.

Dr. Magelssen talked to radiologist Lance Lau, MD.

It was determined that Napolioni probably had a carotid cavernous fistula, or a hole between the carotid artery and the cavernous sinus. The carotid artery is one of two main arteries in the neck which supplies blood to the head and neck. Napolioni would go blind; he was already suffering from double vision.



Above: Looking and seeing normal after his procedure, Napolioni Qoro (center), stands with Mark Magelssen, MD, (left) and Felix Song, MD, (right). Right: An MRI image showing Napolioni's bulging eye before his carotid cavernous fistula was repaired.

He was also at risk of dying from a brain hemorrhage. Only one person in Hawaii had the expertise to repair the damage: Queen's interventional neuro-radiologist Felix Song, MD.

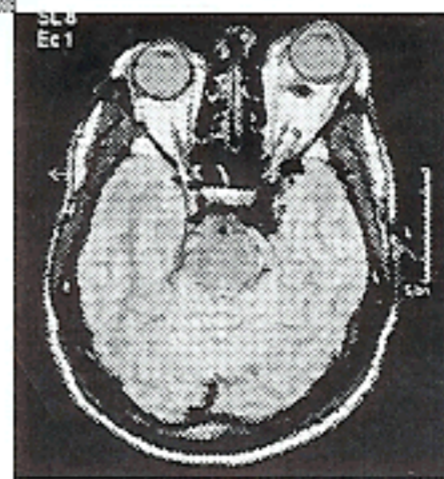
Dr. Song specializes in disorders of the brain, spine and the arteries leading to them. He is qualified to treat

serious conditions such as aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations (AVMs) and narrowing of the arteries. Most of his patients are referred by other physicians on a semi-emergency or emergency basis. Until Queen's brought him on board last year, patients had to travel to the mainland or wait for UCSF specialists to fly to Hawaii.

Returning to Hawaii with a mission, Dr. Magelssen asked QMC President and CEO Art Ushijima if Queen's could help Napolioni. "Art generously offered to treat Napolioni if he could get to Hawaii," said Dr. Magelssen. "It took three and a half months to get through the red tape, but we finally were able to bring him here."

Armed with an MRI (donated by St. Francis Medical Center) and an angiogram from Queen's, Dr. Song confirmed the diagnosis and found the

damage three inches behind Napolioni's left eye. Dr. Song began the procedure by inserting a catheter in a vein via an incision in the left leg. Using balloons



and stainless steel and titanium coils, Dr. Song plugged the hole. "It's a little like building a ship in a bottle," said Dr. Song of the intricately difficult procedure which took 10 and a half hours. Beginning at 10:30 a.m., they were

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Queen's helps Fijian

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through at 9:00 at night. Others who donated their services were Timothy McDevitt, MD, who performed the ophthalmological exam; Winston Ota, MD, anesthesiologist; and Cherylee Chang, MD, Medical Director of the Queen's Neuroscience Institute. Dr. Magelssen opened his home to Napolioni during his stay in Hawaii.

Amazingly, Napolioni not only left Queen's the next day, but his normal vision was restored. "I totally lost hope that I could get my eyes back to normal," said a grateful Napolioni. "I am amazed at how much people have helped, and [at] their dedication, and time they gave to me." To Napolioni, things never looked so good. To all involved, giving was never better.