



Rick & Debbie Bardin

Physician and Nurse in Cameroon



Rick and Debbie were raised in homes where their mothers were the primary spiritual influence in their lives. They attended church throughout their childhood. Rick responded to the Holy Spirit's nudge at age 9 during a revival service in Ft. Worth, Texas. Debbie began to see her need for a personal Savior while attending weekly youth group meetings in high school and made her commitment to Christ on a retreat in the Colorado Rockies during her "Solo-Survival" assignment at 17.

The Bardins are both involved in medicine. Rick went to undergraduate and medical school in Texas. Debbie, from Aurora, Colorado, decided to go to nursing school in Texas. They met at John Peter Smith Hospital in Ft. Worth behind surgical masks in the Operating Room. Rick was an orderly getting hospital experience while in med school and Debbie was a graduate nurse. They were married in 1979.

Debbie was first introduced to missions by a medical mission trip to Haiti while in college, where they visited an orphanage. Rick did some day trips to El Farro Mission in Mexico while they were in El Paso, Texas. During Rick's Internal Medicine residency at University of New Mexico, they both felt God's leading to explore medical missions. Under the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board, they went for two years (1983–85) to Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan, South Korea. At that time, they had one son, Jess, who was 18 months old.

After their Korean experience, Rick took a job with a Christian medical group in Kansas. After 3 years, they both felt God calling them to career medical missions, so in 1989 they moved, now with 2 children (Jess, 6, and Jeanna, 2) to Eku, Nigeria, where they served from 1989 to 2000. Rick taught residents and treated patients at the hospital, and Debbie home-schooled the children, did chronological Bible studies at a leprosy church, and taught pastors' wives at the Baptist Bible college nearby. In 2000, it was time for Jess to start university, and Rick felt led to do a four-year Pathology residency. On completion, Rick was unable to find a request for a pathologist in missions. He decided to join a Christian medical group in Michigan, the Southwestern Medical Clinic. They needed help in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, so he did a one-year fellowship in Geriatrics before joining the group. At SWMC, Rick worked as an internist, geriatrician, and Medical Director of the laboratory. Debbie resumed her nursing career, working in their OB/GYN clinic.

In early 2009, the Bardins heard of the Internal Medicine residency that Dr. Palmer had just started at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon. After a one-week visit to Mbingo, the Bardins became convinced it was where God was leading them to serve. They applied to the NAB and were sent to Mbingo in August of 2010. Rick started the Pathology service and helped teach residents. Debbie found her niche in the HIV outpatient clinic. She enjoys getting to know the patients and the opportunity to counsel them spiritually. The Bardins desire to be instruments of Christ, for His glory and purpose, being ready to give an account of the hope within them to any patient or person God puts in their path.

Birthdays: Rick – January 16; Debbie – June 14

Anniversary: July 14

For more information, visit our website at nabonmission.org or email us at serve@nabconf.org.