CRNA Mariah Mannion has made multiple international service trips with a local group called More Than Medicine, most recently traveling to Malindi, Kenya, in October 2016, where they operated at Tawfiq Hospital.

A team of four CRNAs and one anesthesiologist alternate roles as needed, providing perioperative care for patients having head and neck cancer surgery.

"A favorite thing about this specific trip for me is that it is a beautiful example of a community coming together, without prejudice, to care for patients. A Christian organization helps fund some of the patient care and Kenyan physicians' travel expenses, while we operate in a private, Muslim hospital, both groups so happy to be working together."

The impact of this group's trips has grown as they have evolved into more than just surgical trips. Participants offer education in surgical skills to Kenyan ENT surgeons and local anesthetists observe the procedures to learn management techniques for more complex cases. On their most recent trip, the team was able to teach the local medical team how to use an ICU ventilator they had received as a donation but were unable to use.

This focus on educating local providers means the volunteer participants are helping many more patients than if they were only performing surgical procedures, which makes the missions particularly gratifying to Mariah and her team.