

Population Health *Matters*

Global Health: Innovation/ Implementation / Impact

A report on the Fourth Annual Conference of the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH)

Nine representatives from Thomas Jefferson University, including two from the Jefferson School of Population Health (JSPH), attended the fourth annual conference of the Consortium of Universities for Global Health in Washington, DC (March 14-16, 2013). The theme was **Global Health: Innovation/Implementation/Impact**. The program featured world-renowned keynote speakers and plenary panels addressing the complexity of today's global health challenges and highlighting a diverse group of experts from a broad range of sectors. It was clear that solving global health problems requires a collaborative approach that harnesses the skills and energies of multiple disciplines, promotes cooperation across multiple sectors and embraces innovation. Over 1,390 people attended the conference, representing more than 56 countries. More than 230 speakers presented in the concurrent and special sessions and 308 posters were on view; two of the posters were from the JSPH. A third of the posters focused on education and capacity building in global health.

The conference began and ended with inspiring presentations from the very dynamic Agnes Binagwaho, MD, M(Ped), Minister of Health, Rwanda. Plenaries addressed the issues of: Global leaders in global health; US Government Agencies for Global Health; Innovative financing mechanisms for global health; Innovative technologies and approaches for global health: transforming the present and future; Global health justice: Empowering women, catalyzing change; and Climate change and global health: using science to protect populations. The four prominent directors of US Government Agencies for Global

Health were particularly impressive: Francis Collins, MD, PhD, Director National Institutes of Health (NIH); Thomas Frieden, MD, MPH, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Eric Goosby, MD, US Global AIDS Coordinator, Office of Global Health Diplomacy; and Jonathan Woodson, MD, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and Director of TRICARE Management Activity, US Department of Defense.

Special sessions on the Role of NIH in Global Health Research, Crisis in the Sahel and the Global Burden of Disease (GBD): 2010 Report¹ were both timely and informative. The session on the Global Burden of Disease by Christopher Murray, MD, DPhil, Director, Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation used innovative technology to present the GBD report which facilitates comparisons across a multitude of mortality, morbidity, and quality of life indicators on 291 diseases and injuries, 67 risk factors, and over 1000 sequellae from 186 countries² and was truly amazing.

The concurrent sessions covered a very broad range of topics and disciplines. Topics included: mHealth, oral health, OneHealth, community health, scaling for impact, climate change, human rights, primary health care, women's health, global local health, social media. Key themes that ran throughout include: the importance of collaborating with China and Latin America; developing a sustainable health work force; partnering with faith-based organizations and the private sector; and creating cross-discipline approaches to address malaria and neglected tropical diseases.

Overall, some of the key themes and take away messages of this conference were focused on:

- Innovation (i.e. mHealth, eHealth, telemedicine, technology) as the means of communication, analysis, and treatment for the future.
- Global health programs are also local or "glocal" problems.
- Research and sharing research findings with subjects of research is key to policy development and targeted programs.

Resolving global health issues requires a collaborative cross-cutting approach that encompasses multiple disciplines, promotes cooperation, and embraces innovation. The Jefferson team has been meeting in an attempt to capture the best from the CUGH conference to apply it to the improvement of the TJU global health education programs. ■

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For more information on this conference visit: <http://2013globalhealth.org/>

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2. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. GB Compare Tutorial. 2013. <http://www.healthmetricsandevaluation.org/gbd/multimedia/video/gbd-compare-tutorial>. Accessed April 24, 2013.