

Inaugural Global Health Impact Award Winners Announced

Washington Global Health Alliance names award winners in Rising Star, Luminary Leader and Outstanding Organization categories at ceremony on Oct 14

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, October 15, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The global health community came together tonight for the first-ever Global Health Impact Awards to honor two individuals and one organization whose efforts stood out in 2020. Three

winner from among 11 finalists were selected by judges on the Washington Global Health Alliance's (WGHA) Board of Directors and represent the breadth and depth of global health efforts in partnership with countries around the world.



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*Washington Global Health Alliance president and CEO
Maurizio Vecchione*

WGHA president and CEO Maurizio Vecchione states, “These award winners epitomize the importance and impact of global health innovation, research, and education to address both long-standing health challenges and inequities and immediate crises, such as the current COVID pandemic.”

Global Health Impact Award winners:

Rising Star Award / Awarded to an individual age 40 or under (as of Oct 14, 2021) who is making an exceptional impact in a global health organization or initiative.

•Dr. Patricia Pavlinac, Phd, MS, assistant professor, The Global Center for Integrated Health of Women,

Adolescents, and Children and the Department of Global Health at the University of Washington Schools of Medicine and Public Health, was selected in recognition of her research to identify interventions to reduce illness and death caused by diarrhea and intestinal infections that are

responsible for nearly 500,000 deaths annually in children under age five, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The Award notes her creativity and initiative in the design and implementation of large studies in Kenya and throughout the world evaluating the benefits and costs of broad-spectrum antibiotic use in children as well as in the prevention of Shigella infections. Her work influences clinicians, policy makers, and international guidelines.

Luminary Leader Award / Awarded to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and a relentless commitment to the global health community.

•Dr. Rachel Nugent, vice president and director for the Center for Global Noncommunicable Diseases at RTI International (headquartered in North Carolina) was honored for her four decades of work as a health economics researcher and policy advisor, leading the global narrative that cost-effective policy interventions can reduce noncommunicable diseases (such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes) in low- and middle-income countries, saving millions of lives and trillions in economic productivity. Her economic arguments are compelling governments around the world to create and enforce smart policies to reduce the burden of noncommunicable diseases, which account for over 70% of global deaths but receive just 3% of development assistance for health.

Organizational Impact Award / Awarded to an organization making an extraordinary impact in improving global health equity (considers impact relative to size and scope of financial and staff resources).

•COVID-19 Prevention Network (part of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center) was awarded for its role in developing and conducting large COVID-19 vaccine trials. It identified and collaborated with 120 clinical research sites, including Veterans Administration Facilities, Historically Black Medical Colleges, and the Indian Health Service. Highlights of the Network's accomplishments include developing community education/engagement materials to enhance enrollment of BIPOC communities, PSA campaigns and animations in English and Spanish to encourage trial participation, and a participant website and registry that within three months had over 500,000 volunteers. The Network played a critical behind-the-scenes role in moving the COVID vaccine trials forward through its existing networks, investigators, statistical design/analysis, laboratory harmonization, and community involvement, making incredible progress for global health in a short amount of time.

Other finalists for the Rising Star Award were Philip Kenol, multilateral policy and advocacy officer at Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC); Lisa Smith, senior market dynamics officer at PATH and the project director of the COVID-19 Respiratory Care Response Coordination Initiative; and Dr. Deborah Thomson, founder and president of One Health Lessons.

Finalists for the Luminary Leader Award were Dr. Connie Celum, MD, MPH, professor, Departments of Global Health, Medicine and Epidemiology at the University of Washington School of Medicine; Dr. Matthew Hepburn, director, Vaccine Development, Countermeasures Acceleration Group (formerly Operation Warp Speed); and Dr. Nanthalile Mugala, chief of Africa region, PATH.

The other Organizational Impact finalists were Equalize Health and Health Alliance International.

Global Health Impact Awards sponsors include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Columbia Bank, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Providence, #ScienceWorks, Terasaki Institute, and We Work for Health Washington.

Susan Ward

Washington Global Health Alliance

+1 206-786-0094

susan@TeamSoapbox.com

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