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Washington Global Health Alliance announces the 2019 Pioneers of Global Health Award winners

Seattle, Washington; June 28, 2019—The Washington Global Health Alliance (WGHA) is honored to announce the 2019 Pioneers of Global Health Award winners, recognizing a few of the people and organizations working relentlessly to improve health equity around the world.

“The 2019 Pioneers awardees are bold, compassionate, creative, and persistent in their work to improve health equity. They include a young woman whose impatience to prevent HIV in pregnant women has already helped 20,000 women in Kenya and expanded HIV prevention options; a man who created a global community and resource-appropriate guidelines for breast cancer care; and two organizations who collaborate to diagnose chronic myeloid leukemia earlier and help patients live longer and healthier lives,” said Dena Morris, WGHA president.

Winners were selected by a panel of global health experts chaired by Erin McCarthy, senior program officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and WGHA board member. Awardees will be honored at the [Pioneers of Global Health Awards Dinner & Auction](#) on October 17, 2019. [Table sponsorships](#) and [limited individual tickets](#) are available to the public for online purchase.

Winners of the 2019 WGHA Pioneers of Global Health Awards

Pioneers Award for Impact: Dr. Benjamin Anderson, Breast Health Global Initiative, University of Washington, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

WGHA’s sixth annual Pioneers Award for Impact recognizes Dr. Benjamin Anderson, who’s created a global breast oncology community to improve breast cancer early diagnosis and treatment in low-resource settings.

Dr. Anderson founded the Breast Health Global Initiative (BHGI) in 2002 with a vision for improving breast cancer outcomes in limited-resource settings. He is a driving force who led an international collective effort to create resource-stratified guidelines for providing care in different settings, making it easier for countries to make incremental investments and progress. Based on BHGI’s sentinel work, resource stratification has now been adopted by the World Health Organization and others as a model for creating practical guidelines for the management of other cancers around the world.

Dr. Anderson's leadership is behind the Breast Cancer Initiative 2.5, an international platform for collaborating and sharing best practices, policies, and country-level guidelines. Judges were impressed by the complex collaborations Dr. Anderson has initiated and navigated, collaborations with practical applications and global impact.

Commenting on Dr. Anderson's contributions to the field and his approach to collaboration, Lisa Stevens, former deputy director of Planning and Operations at the Center for Global Health, National Cancer Institute, said, "Ben has truly been a pioneer in evidence-based resource-stratified guidelines. He didn't stop there. After 10+ years of work on the entire continuum of breast cancer, he wanted to ensure that the guidelines would be used by ministries of health. He led the development of the Knowledge Summaries for Breast Cancer so that policymakers could best utilize the guidelines. And even this wasn't enough as he convened a recent meeting to ensure that there is action in countries to impact the health and lives of women globally. His passion for breast health is a gift for the world."

"This WGHA award is tremendously meaningful to me," said Dr. Anderson. "The work of our collaborators from countries around the world has sparked a global effort to improve breast cancer outcomes in all resource settings, not just those countries with wealth. As the most common cancer among women and the most likely reason for a woman to die of cancer, we have reason to work together toward this shared goal. When BHGI started, we were told that improved breast cancer outcomes were beyond the reach of most countries. Today we know that through the coordination of the health care communities, governments and policymakers, and the advocacy communities, meaningful and sustainable improvements are not only possible but are happening. I am honored to accept the WGHA Pioneers Award for Impact on behalf of the people around the globe that have come together to create meaningful change."

Pioneers Rising Leader: Dr. Jillian Pintye, University of Washington, Department of Global Health

WGHA's 2019 Pioneers Rising Leader is Dr. Jillian Pintye, whose impatience to prevent HIV is already making a difference for pregnant women and has expanded HIV prevention options for policymakers.

Dr. Pintye is focused on preventing HIV in pregnant women, who often don't know their HIV risk and who may be more susceptible to getting infected during pregnancy. Dr. Pintye led groundbreaking research to show that PrEP, an HIV prevention medicine, is safe to use during pregnancy. She didn't stop with epidemiologic analyses, though. Equipped with the research, Dr. Pintye then partnered with Dr. John Kinuthia and his team in Kenya to develop and implement an innovative PrEP program in nearly 40 clinics. The program builds on existing clinics, reaches existing patients, and to date has screened more than 20,000 women, with close to 4,000 of them initiating PrEP.

The judges noted that Dr. Pintye demonstrated direct impact, bravery, initiative, and true collaboration, all while working in challenging political and social environments. Dr. Jared Baeten, vice chair of the UW Department of Global Health, echoed that praise. "Jillian is a brilliant and extraordinarily creative global health scientist. She works easily across disciplines and on the cutting-edge questions that will have

tremendous impact on lives around the world,” he said. “Keep an eye on her—her progress will be meteoric.”

“I am deeply honored and humbled to receive this award from WGHA,” said Dr. Pintye. “It is a privilege and joy to work within University of Washington [UW], the Department of Global Health [DGH], and Global WACH’s dedicated community of scientists that strive to improve the lives of women, adolescents, and children by advancing HIV prevention and care. I am grateful for the mission, values, and collaborations of UW, DGH, Global WACH, and our partners in Kenya.”

Pioneers Outstanding Collaboration: Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and The Max Foundation for their diagnostic testing partnership for chronic myeloid leukemia (CML)

WGHA’s 2018 Pioneers Outstanding Collaboration award winners—Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and The Max Foundation—are leveraging their unique strengths in a groundbreaking collaboration, Spot On CML, to help cancer patients in underresourced countries live longer and healthier lives.

Testing for CML once required fresh blood, making it hard to test patients in remote and underresourced settings. Fred Hutch’s Radich lab developed a low-cost, paper-based method to diagnose CML using dried blood. In this collaboration, the Hutch teamed up with The Max Foundation, who used its physician network to identify patients in low- and middle- income countries in need of testing. After the Fred Hutch lab confirms testing results, The Max Foundation provides lifelong treatment to these CML patients free of charge.

“Without treatment, CML patients live well less than a decade. Thanks to Spot On CML, these patients enjoy a near normal life expectancy,” said Dr. Jerry Radich, Fred Hutch leukemia researcher and diagnostic expert. He added, “The Max Foundation and Fred Hutch, with assistance from Cepheid and the International CML Foundation, have demonstrated that multiple agencies can cooperate effectively and do enormous good.”

Pat Garcia-Gonzalez, CEO of The Max Foundation, doubled down on the significance, noting that “the human impact of our collaboration is priceless and goes a long way towards closing the cancer divide. Thanks to an innovative technique developed by the Radich lab at Fred Hutch coupled with our unique collaboration, within just a year’s time more than 500 people facing cancer have now been given access to the right treatment, at the right time.”

About the Washington Global Health Alliance

WGHA is a membership organization of more than 75 global health organizations working to achieve health equity. WGHA connects and informs Washington’s global health community, creating a culture of collaboration at home so our members can have more impact in the world. Learn more at www.wghalliance.org.