

Speaker Bios

Saad B. Omer

Director, Yale Institute for Global Health
Associate Dean (Global Health Research), Yale School of Medicine;
Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases), Yale School of Medicine
Susan Dwight Bliss Professor of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, Yale
School of Public Health
New Haven, Connecticut
United States



Dr. Omer has conducted studies in the United States, Guatemala, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, South Africa, and Australia. Dr Omer's research portfolio includes epidemiology of respiratory viruses such as influenza, RSV, and - more recently - COVID-19; clinical trials to estimate efficacy of maternal and/or infant influenza, pertussis, polio, measles and pneumococcal vaccines; and trials to evaluate drug regimens to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Moreover, he has conducted several studies on interventions to increase immunization coverage and acceptance. Dr Omer's work has been cited in global and country-specific policy recommendations and has informed clinical practice and health legislation in several countries. He has directly mentored over 100 junior faculty, clinical and research post-doctoral fellows, and PhD and other graduate students. Dr. Omer has published widely in peer reviewed journals including the New England Journal of Medicine, JAMA, Lancet, British Medical Journal, Pediatrics, American Journal of Public Health, Science, and Nature and is the author of op-eds for publications such as the New York Times, Politico, and the Washington Post.

Dr. Omer has received multiple awards –including the Maurice Hilleman Award by the National Foundation of Infectious Diseases for his work on the impact of maternal influenza immunization on respiratory illness in infants younger than 6 months-for whom there is no vaccine. He has served on several advisory panels including the U.S. National Vaccine Advisory Committee, Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria -Vaccine Innovation Working Group, and WHO Expert Advisory Group for Healthcare Worker Vaccination. He has also served as an academic affiliate of the Office of Evaluation Sciences –formerly known as the White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team.

Speaker Bios

Laith Abu Raddad

Professor of Healthcare Policy and Research
Assistant Dean for Extramural Research Funding
Director of the Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Biomathematics Research Core
Weill Cornell Medicine – Qatar
Doha, Qatar



Laith Abu-Raddad is a Professor of Healthcare Policy and Research at Weill Cornell Medicine – Qatar, Cornell University, and Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the College of Health & Life Sciences, HBKU. Laith's expertise is in infectious disease epidemiology with emphasis on quantitative methods including mathematical modeling and biostatistics. He has led several high-impact studies at international and regional levels. He has published more than 200 pieces of work with a citation h-index of 55. His scientific research has been published in journals such as Science, The Lancet, PLOS Medicine, PNAS, Clinical Infectious Diseases, Hepatology, BMC Medicine, Science Translational Medicine and AIDS. He is or has been the principal investigator of several projects funded by various funding agencies, and has acted as an expert advisor or a consultant for several international organizations. His research work has been key in the formulation of public health policy at the regional and international levels. Findings of his research studies have received coverage in international media such as at Al Jazeera, The New York Times, BBC and The Economist.

Speaker Bios

Mark Smolinski

President
Ending Pandemics
San Francisco, California
United States



Mark Smolinski brings 25 years of experience in applying innovative solutions to improve disease prevention, response, and control across the globe. Mark is leading a well-knit team—bringing together technologists; human, animal, and environmental health experts; and key community stakeholders to co-create tools for early detection, advanced warning, and prevention of pandemic threats. Community health workers, village volunteers, farmers, and interested public citizens in Albania, Brazil, Cambodia, Europe, Laos, Myanmar, Tanzania, Thailand, and the United States are among those using their own solutions to address pressing local needs. Since 2009, Mark has served as the Chief Medical Officer and Director of Global Health at the Skoll Global Threats Fund (SGTF), where he developed the Ending Pandemics in Our Lifetime Initiative in 2012. His work at SGTF created a solid foundation for the work of Ending Pandemics, which branched out as an independent entity on January 1, 2018.

Prior to SGTF, Mark developed the Predict and Prevent Initiative at Google.org, as part of the starting team at Google's philanthropic arm. Working with a team of engineers, Google Flu Trends (a project that had tremendous impact on the use of big data for disease surveillance) was created in partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Mark has served as Vice President for Biological Programs at the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a public charity directed by CNN founder Ted Turner and former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn. Before NTI, he led an 18-member expert committee of the National Academy of Medicine on the 2003 landmark report "Microbial Threats to Health: Emergence, Detection, and Response." Mark served as the sixth Luther Terry Fellow in Washington, D.C., in the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General and as an Epidemic Intelligence Officer with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Mark received his BS in Biology and MD from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He is board-certified in preventive medicine and public health and holds an M.P.H. from the University of Arizona, where he was recognized as the 2016 Alumnus of the Year. Mark was on the investigation team that discovered hantavirus, a newly identified pathogen, in 1993. His passion for helping all peoples of the world save lives and improve livelihoods motivates partners on five continents.