



# Emory Global Health Connection

## *Building Bridges for Better Health*

September 2017

### Dr. Jeffrey P. Koplan, Emory Vice President for Global Health, Discusses his Views on Global Health at Emory University

Tackling health issues around the world stands at the forefront of current global health efforts today. At Emory University, the Emory Global Health Institute (EGHI) works to improve health globally by providing support to Emory faculty and students involved in a variety of global health research, scholarship, service, and training activities. EGHI's founder, Dr. Jeffrey P. Koplan, feels that EGHI has had a positive impact on global health efforts at Emory over the last decade, and looks forward to continuing to see improvements in health outcomes around the world.

Emory University established EGHI in 2006 as a university-wide organization charged with fostering global health collaboration across the university's schools and helping it improve health around the world. Dr. Koplan served as its director for seven years. Before coming to Emory

in 2002 as Vice President for Academic Health Affairs, he was Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where he had worked in numerous posts for 26 years. He has experience working on a variety of health issues,

including tobacco control, smallpox and HIV/AIDS, and the Bhopal chemical disaster. His expertise has been pivotal in the success of EGHI and its global health activities.

EGHI focuses on multidisciplinary approaches to

solving global health problems. "So many contemporary health problems, whether they're domestic or global, require multidisciplinary solutions," says Dr. Koplan. Students and faculty at every school within the university can participate in EGHI activities. "We feel that global health has something to impart and something to gain from all disciplines," he adds. This multidisciplinary approach sets EGHI apart from other global health institutes.



*Dr. Koplan at the 2016 Intramural Global Health Case Competition*

In addition to collaborating with all of Emory's schools, external partnerships are also an important facet to EGHI's work. These partnerships, which include collaborations with the CDC, Georgia Tech (GT), the Carter Center, and numerous other in-country NGOs and international organizations, help EGHI expand its geographic reach and engage with colleagues around the world on various global health issues.

One of EGHI's roles is to support faculty research and scholarship, and connect faculty members with potential research collaborators. This support has resulted in a number of projects, from improving water and sanitation around the world through the Center for Global Safe Water at Emory, to improving global control of tuberculosis (TB) in HIV-positive populations through the Zambia-Emory Research Initiative in Tuberculosis and TB/HIV. These supported projects have yielded great results and led to larger programs focusing on these issues. More recently, EGHI administered seed grants funded by the Marcus Foundation, which have enabled Emory faculty members to conduct preliminary research on how to address a variety of childhood illnesses around the world.

In addition to supporting Emory faculty, EGHI has developed student programs that provide innovative, out-of-the-classroom global health learning opportunities. Whether it is working abroad through the EGHI Field Scholars Awards Program, competing in EGHI's annual global case competitions, or serving on its Student Advisory Committee, there are numerous ways students can become involved with EGHI and its global health work. These experiences, all of which embrace

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– Dr. Jeffrey P. Koplan

the multidisciplinary approach, help prepare students to solve global health problems in the real world.

In addition to its faculty and student programs, EGHI serves as the home for the U.S. office of the International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI), an organization that helps strengthen the public health capacity in 93 countries, benefiting more than five billion people on four continents. Dr. Koplan was founder of IANPHI, which receives program support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the CDC. The Child Health and Mortality

Prevention Surveillance (CHAMPS) Network is also an EGHI program that was funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. CHAMPS is seeking to understand the causes of childhood mortality in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia so that effective strategies can be developed to prevent future childhood deaths from happening.

As EGHI enters its second decade of global health work, Dr. Koplan looks forward to continuing to work with faculty and students from all disciplines, maintain and foster existing and new partnerships, expand current programs, and strive to improve health around the world.



Meherpur District, Bangladesh; Photo Credit: Anushree Mahajan, 2015 EGHI Global Health Student Photography Contest Participant