The Syrian American Medical Society
SAMS 6TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Healthcare & Medical Relief in an Evolving Domestic & Global Landscape

Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort & Spa
Huntington Beach, CA

February 17–19, 2017 • Gala Dinner February 18
society.sams-usa.net
# SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY
## SIXTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

### CONFERENCE CHAIRS

- M. Fuad Azrak, MD, MPH
- Anas Kawayeh, MD

### CONFERENCE SCIENTIFIC CHAIRS

- Hussam Mihtar, MD
- Wael Hakmeh, DO, FACEP

### CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fuad Azrak, MD</th>
<th>Majd Isreb, MD, FSP, FASN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wael Hakmeh, DO, FACEP</td>
<td>Mayssoun Alhariri, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farhan Khabaz, MD</td>
<td>Souheil Habbail, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anas Kawayeh, MD</td>
<td>Susan Habbal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hussam Mihtar, MD</td>
<td>Suzanne Akhras</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COORDINATOR

For all conference inquiries:

Jeehan Shehrine Binte Faiz, jfaiz@sams-usa.net, 240-543-3921

### CONFERENCE LOCATION

**Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort & Spa**

21500 Pacific Coast Hwy

Huntington Beach, CA 92648
# SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

## FRIDAY FEBRUARY 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Open Registration (Huntington Foyer)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Opening Ceremony (Huntington Ballroom)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Social Reception</td>
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</table>

## SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast (Huntington Terrace)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Scientific Program (Huntington Ballroom)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Non-CME Parallel Session (Catalina)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.–3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>CME Parallel Session (Catalina)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.–10:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Gala Dinner (Salon DEFG)</td>
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## SUNDAY FEBRUARY 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m.–9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast (Huntington Terrace)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Scientific Program (Huntington Ballroom)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

### REGISTRATION

Registration should be available to those arriving late until 9 pm

### OPENING CEREMONY

Welcome remarks

### SOCIAL RECEPTION

This is a social gathering; meet your friends and colleagues. Hors d’oeuvres and drinks
### SESSION 1

**CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL MEDICAL RELIEF**

**Moderator:** Maher Azzouz

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30am–9:00am</td>
<td>After Aleppo: Can health care be protected in conflict?</td>
<td>Leonard Rubenstein, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00am–9:30am</td>
<td>SAMS Global Response: From Greece to the future medicine without borders</td>
<td>Meghan Gunst, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30am–10:00am</td>
<td>Humanitarian diplomacy</td>
<td>Ahmad Tarakji, MD</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Break

#### SESSION 2

**MEETING HEALTH CARE NEEDS IN A DISASTER ZONE**

**Moderators:** Lara Zakaria, Amjad Rass

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:15am–10:30am</td>
<td>SAMS nephrology humanitarian response: the SNKF story</td>
<td>K. Hatahet, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30am–10:45am</td>
<td>Performing trauma surgery in Aleppo</td>
<td>Mahmoud Hariri, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45am–11:00am</td>
<td>Tele-radiology: SAMS experience and lessons learned</td>
<td>Ihsan Mamoun, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00am–11:30am</td>
<td>Update on SAMS mental health services for refugees</td>
<td>M.K. Hamza, PhD, Yassar Kanawati, MD, Iyad Alkhoury, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30am–11:45am</td>
<td>Challenges of implementing mental health services in crisis areas</td>
<td>M.K. Hamza, MD and Iyad Alkhoury, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45am–12:00pm</td>
<td>Cardiology medical missions</td>
<td>Wael Al-Husami, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00pm–12:15pm</td>
<td>Critical care through Tele-Medicine in crisis areas</td>
<td>Anas Moughrabieh, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15pm–12:30pm</td>
<td>Challenges in medical humanitarian work: Snapshot of the SAMS Foundation’s work in 2016</td>
<td>Majd Isreb, MD</td>
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</table>
### SESSION 3A  
**HEALTH CARE DOMESTIC CHALLENGES**  
**Moderators:** Eyad ElMasri, Mayssoun Al-Hariri  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30pm–2:00pm</td>
<td>Narcotics and the law</td>
<td>Ben Shwachman, MD, Esq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00pm–2:30pm</td>
<td>MACRA and you</td>
<td>Khaliq Siddiq, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30pm–3:00pm</td>
<td>Waterpipe (hooka) smoking: epidemiology, toxicology and control</td>
<td>Wasim Maziak, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00pm–3:15pm</td>
<td>Where we are with the affordable care act: Perspective from enrollment outreach volunteers</td>
<td>Michael J. Adelman and Rim Manaan</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### SESSION 3B  
**INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL RELIEF**  
**Moderators:** Ihsan Mamoun MD, Tarek Kteleh, MD  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30pm–1:45pm</td>
<td>Telemedicine: SAHA platform</td>
<td>Amal Katrib</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45pm–2:00pm</td>
<td>The use of integrative medicine for palliative medicine in the refugee population</td>
<td>Catherine Ireland, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00pm–2:15pm</td>
<td>Cardiovascular care for Syrian refugees in 2016 and beyond</td>
<td>Zaki Lababidi, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:15pm–2:30pm</td>
<td>Psychosocial variables and cardiovascular disease profile in a Syrian refugee cohort</td>
<td>Mohammed Akhter, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30pm–2:45pm</td>
<td>The use of point-of-care (POC) ultrasound in refugee care</td>
<td>Dina Seif, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:45pm–3:00pm</td>
<td>Improving Care of Refugees in Informal Settlements of Western Turkey</td>
<td>Rache M. Mureau-Haines, ARNP</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00pm–3:15pm</td>
<td>Low cost homemade ultrasound phantoms for medical education in resource-limited field hospitals</td>
<td>Ameer Al-Hadidi</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3:15pm–3:30pm Break

### POSTER SESSION

9:00am–3:00pm

### GENERAL BODY MEETING

3:30pm–5:00pm

### GALA DINNER

6:00pm–10:30pm
7:30am–9:30am  Continental breakfast

8:00am–9:00am  **SESSION 4**  
**MEDICAL UPDATE 1**

*Moderators: Loay Kabbani, MD, Mohammed Jaber Kabbesh, MD*

8:00am–8:20am  What should non-cardiologists know about anti-arrhythmic drugs?, *Mahmoud Houmsee, MD*

8:20am–8:40am  Complementary/interactive medicine: A review of the evidence, *Hend Azhary, MD*

8:40am–9:00am  Visual diagnosis challenge Q&A, *Wael Hakmeh, DO FACEP*

9:00am–10:45am  **SESSION 5**  
**HEALING THE HEALERS: HEALTH ISSUES OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS**

*Moderator: Hussam Mihtar, MD*

9:00am–9:30am  Sleep deprivation: Effect on daytime function and performance, *Safwan Badr, MD*

9:30am–9:45am  Insomnia and other things that keep you at night, *Jennifer Martin, PhD*

9:45am–10:15am  Healer, heal thyself, *Iyad Alkhouri, MD*

10:15am–10:45am  Physician career options in an evolving healthcare industry, *M. Ammar Hatahet, MD*

10:45am–11:00am  Break

11:00am–12:00pm  **SESSION 6**  
**LAW AND MEDICINE**

*Moderators: Souheil Habbal, MD, Farhan Khabaz, MD*

11:00am–11:30am  Legal issues related to travel and providing international medical relief, *Mary Lehman, Esq*

11:30am–12:00pm  Malpractice depositions and physician contract negotiations, *Michael Thornhill, Esq*
**SESSION 7**

**MEDICAL UPDATE 2**

**Moderators:** Saadeh Alrajab, MD, Opada Alzuhaili, MD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:00pm–12:20pm</td>
<td>Bone marrow transplant to non-oncologists, <em>Monzr Al Malki, MD</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>12:20pm–12:40pm</td>
<td>HCV and fatty liver: Disease of the past and another of the future, <em>Mazen Noureddin, MD</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:40pm–1:00pm</td>
<td>Skin and soft tissue infections management in limited resources settings, <em>Mohammed Jaber Kabbesh, MD</em></td>
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**NON-CME PARALLEL PROGRAM (SATURDAY)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30am–12:30am</td>
<td>NON-CME PARALLEL PROGRAM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYRIAN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30am–11:00am</td>
<td>Refugee resettlement future: the effect of U.S. policy changes, <em>David Murphy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00am–12:00pm</td>
<td>It Takes A Community #RefugeesWelcome, <em>Suzanne Akhras, Bayanne Mihtar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00am–12:30am</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30pm–1:30pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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</table>
CME STATEMENTS

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of Indiana University School of Medicine and the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS). The Indiana University School of Medicine is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

DESIGNATION STATEMENT

Indiana University School of Medicine designates this live activity for a maximum of 10.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

FACULTY DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In accordance with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Standards for Commercial Support, educational programs sponsored by Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM) must demonstrate balance, independence, objectivity, and scientific rigor. All faculty, authors, editors, and planning committee members participating in an IUSM-sponsored activity are required to disclose any relevant financial interest or other relationship with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or provider(s) of commercial services that are discussed in an educational activity.

The planning committee and those in a position to control the content of this activity have disclosed no relevant financial relationships, except for:

Dina Seif, MD, MBA has disclosed that she received a Honoraria from SonoSite.

Mazen Noureddin, MD has disclosed that he received a Honoraria from Abbott, Echosens and OWL and served on an advisory committee.
INSTRUCTIONS TO RECEIVE CREDIT

To receive credit read the introductory CME material, check in at the designated registration area, attend the activity, and complete the self-claim form online. The CME evaluation will be included in a post activity email with a link to complete.

How to claim credit and download your certificate:


2. Sign in using your registration email and password, or create a new account. If you previously participated in a CME activity accredited by IU but do not know your password, please enter your email address and click on the ‘Forget Your Password’ button. Your password will be emailed to you.

3. Click the MyCME button and click the Claim Credit tile

4. Enter in the Event ID: 164855 and click Verify Event ID button

5. Choose the Type of Credit and enter the hours you attended

6. Click Yes to attest that you completed the activity, sign, and click Submit

7. On the Evaluations and Certificates page, click Download Certificate

Estimated Time to Complete This Activity: 10 hours and 15 minutes

Credit Claiming Deadline: To ensure all credits are accurately reported, each activity will be available for 90 days. After 90 days, any requests to claim credits after the stated deadline will be subject to an administrative fee.

Contact Information
IU School of Medicine, Division of Continuing Medical Education
410 W. 10th Street, Suite 2100, Indianapolis IN 46202
317-274-0104 / cme@iu.edu
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Leonard Rubenstein, MD, Senior Scholar and Director of the Program in Human Rights, Health and Conflict at the Center for Human Rights and Public Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and a core faculty member at the Berman Institute of Bioethics at Johns Hopkins University.

Ahmad Tarakji, MD, SAMS Society President

Kamel Hatahet, MD, Secretary of Syrian National Kidney Foundation

Mahmoud Hariri, MD, Senior HHI Fellow, Visiting Scientist, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Dr. Mahmoud Hariri holds a Doctorate of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Aleppo University, and a Master Degree in General Surgery, faculty of Medicine, Aleppo University

Ihsan Mamoun, MD, Assistant Professor of Radiology Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine; Pediatric and Neuroradiologist; Former SAMS Foundation Board member and head of SAMS Lebanon office.

Iyad Alkhouri, MD

Wael Al-Husami, MD, FACC, FACP, Medical Director, International Health, Interventional Cardiology, Vascular Medicine & Endovascular Intervention, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Tufts University, Lahey Hospital & Medical Center

Anas Moughrabieh, MD, Assistant Professor, Wayne State University, School of Medicine, Detroit, MI

Majd Isreb, MD, FACP, FASN, SAMS Foundation Chairman

Ben Shwachman, M.D., Esq

Khaliq Siddiq, MD, Senior Medical Director, Agilon Health

Michael J. Adelman M.S., P.E. Organizing for Action of the San Gabriel Valley & Rim Manaa, BS in Computer Science

Wasim Maziak, MD, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Epidemiology, Florida International University

Hend Azhary, MD. Assistant professor, Clinical Clerkship Director, Department of Family Medicine, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, and Sparrow/MSU family medicine residency program attending

Catherine Ireland, MD, NMD, MS, LAc Integrated Relief
Zaki Lababidi, MD, FACC, FSCAI, President, Gilbert Cardiology

Mohammed Akhter, MD, FACC, Assistant Professor of Medicine; Staff, Interventional Cardiology, Endovascular Interventions and Vascular Medicine, Division of Cardiology, University of Massachusetts

Mary Lehman, JD, NREMT, Law Office of Mary A. Lehman

Rache M. Mureau-Haines, DNP, ARNP. University of Washington Department of Surgery

Ameer Al-Hadidi

Amal Katrib, PhD Candidate, MSc, UCLA, David Geffen School of Medicine

Mahmoud Houmsee, MD, Associate Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at the Ohio State University Medical Center

Dina Seif, MD MBA RDMS FACEP

Wael Hakmeh, DO, FACEP, Clinical Assistant Professor, Michigan State University

Jennifer Martin, Ph.D. Associate Professor at David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles; Research Health Scientist/Psychologist at VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

M. Ammar Hatahet, MD, MPH, FACP; Chair, McLaren HealthCare Institutional Review Board; Director, Center for Weight Management; Clinical Professor of Medicine, Michigan State University

Michael Thornhill, Esq., Miller Health Law Group, APLC

Monzr Al Malki, MD, Assistant clinical professor, Department of Hematology and Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation, City of Hope

Mazen Noureddin, MD

Mohammed Jaber Kabbesh, MD Associate clinical professor UC Davis school of medicine, Division Head Infectious Diseases Mercy Medical Group

David Murphy, Executive Director—IRC San Diego, CA

Safwan Badr, MD, MBA, Professor and Chief, Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine, Harper University Hospital, Wayne State University School of Medicine.
Wael Al-Husami, M.D. is an interventional cardiologist, Director of International Health and a senior member of the executive health team for Lahey Hospital & Medical Center in Burlington, MA. In addition, he is an assistant professor at Tufts University School of Medicine and a faculty member at Brown University’s Alpert Medical School.

He is a member of the board of trustees of Al-Khaldi Hospital & Medical Center in Amman, Jordan, and serves as a Senior Medical Quality Expert in the customer protection unit for the Dubai Health Authority. He also established a unique clinical nursing program at Lahey Hospital & Medical Center in partnership with multiple universities in Massachusetts and the Middle East.

Dr. Al-Husami is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular medicine and interventional cardiology. He holds a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Jordan. He completed his residency in internal medicine through Cornell Weill Medical College; and completed fellowships in cardiovascular disease, interventional cardiology, vascular medicine and endovascular peripheral intervention at Lahey Hospital & Medical Center and St. Elizabeth Medical Center through Tufts University School of Medicine.

Jennifer L. Martin, Ph.D. is a Clinical Sleep Psychologist and an Associate Professor at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA where she teaches about caring for patients with sleep disorders and about the importance of sleep in maintaining health. Dr. Martin also is a Research Scientist and Psychologist at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System and a National Expert Trainer in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia.

Dr. Martin serves on the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and is the President of the American Sleep Medicine Foundation.

Kamel Hatahet, M.D., is a Nephrologist at Southern Maryland Kidney Care Center, Leonardtown, MD and currently holds the position of Secretary of Syrian National Kidney Foundation (SNKF). He completed his Internal Medicine Residency at Temple University Hospital, Philadelphia followed by a Fellowship in Nephrology at Temple University Hospital, Philadelphia.

Dr. Tameem Shoukfih graduated from Damascus University Medical School in 1985 then pursued his medical training in USA where he was enrolled in a 3-year Pediatric Residency-Training program at Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, Michigan.
He did his fellowship in Pediatric Emergency Medicine in Memphis, Tennessee. He is board-certified in Pediatrics and in Pediatric Emergency Medicine.

He has a 16-years of experience in pediatric emergency service. With the help of his team, he developed the first-stand-alone pediatric emergency department in the UAE. He is currently a clinical assistant professor at The university of Iowa Hospitals and clinics and the University of Iowa Carver Medical School.

Majd Isreb, MD, FACP, FASN, Chairman of SAMS Foundation. Dr. Isreb is a nephrologist in Southwest Washington State. He received his medical degree from Damascus University School of Medicine and his Nephrology fellowship at Loyola University Medical Center in Chicago. He currently serves as the President of the Medical Staff at St. John Medical Center. He has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals related to the topic of diabetes and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) and more recently about End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) in armed conflict.

Dr. Isreb has done extensive volunteer work in organizing, leading, and participating in Medical Missions to Jordan to attend to Syrian refugees. Dr. Isreb served as Chairman of the Jordan Relief Committee and is the current chairman of the SAMS Foundation. In 2014, he set up a dialysis program in Jordan in collaboration between the Syrian American Medical Society and the Syrian Organization for Social Welfare to dialyze Syrian refugees.

Dina Seif, M.D. is a board-certified Emergency Physician who graduated from the University of California, Irvine. She completed an Internal Medicine internship at St. Vincent Medical Center in New York and residency training in Emergency Medicine at LAC+USC Medical Center in Los Angeles, California. She is fellowship-trained in Emergency Ultrasound and has lectured on the use of point-of-care ultrasound nationally and internationally. Dr. Seif currently works at the University of Southern California and Mission Hospital in Laguna Beach. She volunteered with SAMS Global Foundation in Greece in the summer of 2016. Dr. Seif is also the Vice President of Physician Moms Group, a 501c3 organization of over 64,000 female physicians.

Suzanne Akhras Sahloul is the founder and Executive Director of the Syrian Community Network (SCN), a community-based refugee support network focused on supporting Syrian refugees in their resettlement in the Chicagoland area. Suzanne is also the founder of the Syrian American Medical Society’s Midwest Foundation. She holds a Master’s Degree in Organizational Leadership from Lewis University. Suzanne is currently pursuing a Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership at the Kellogg School of Management.
Khaliq Siddiq, M.D. is the Senior Medical Director of Vantage Medical Group and Agilon Health. Prior to joining Vantage, Dr. Siddiq led the medical groups of the St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare since 2007. At St. Joseph he served as the lead hospitalist for St. Jude Heritage Medical Group. He was also instrumental in the development of an Intensivist program, which provides 24/7 coverage of the St. Jude Medical Center Intensive Care Unit.

Dr. Siddiq has a bachelor’s of science in psychobiology, a master’s degree in public health from UCLA, a doctor of medicine degree from St. George’s University School of Medicine, and he completed his Internal Medicine residency at LA County/USC. He has previously served on the CAPG and the Orange County Medical Association boards. He is also a founding board member of UMMA Community Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center in South Los Angeles.

Leonard S. Rubenstein is Senior Scholar and Director of the Program in Human Rights, Health and Conflict at the Center for Human Rights and Public Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and a core faculty member at the Berman Institute of Bioethics at Johns Hopkins University. Prior to coming to Johns Hopkins in 2009, Mr. Rubenstein was a Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace, and for a decade before that, Executive Director and then President of Physicians for Human Rights. He has engaged in extensive research and writing on human rights and health, particularly in situations of conflict. He founded and chairs the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition, a group of humanitarian, human rights, health provider organizations working at the global and national levels, that seeks to reduce attacks on and interference with health workers, patients, facilities and transports.

Mr. Rubenstein is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Board of Directors of the Global Health Council and Healing Across the Divides. He has served on the Governing Council of the American Public Health Association and the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Congressional Minority Caucuses’ Healthcare Hero Award, the Sidel-Levy Award for Peace of the American Public Health Association, and the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) recognition award.

Mohammed Akhter, M.D. currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiology at the University of Massachusetts. He is board certified in General Cardiology, Interventional Cardiology and Endovascular Interventions. He has received numerous awards and accolades, such as the Centra Memorial Gold Medal and the Burton Brown Silver Medal.
for scoring in the highest percentile of his graduating class from King Edward Medical School in 1997. More recently he was recognized at UMASS receiving the “Champions of Excellence Award” in 2012. He has published in major peer-reviewed journals such as the NEJM, Circulation and the Journal of the American College of Cardiology. He also is a reviewer for numerous publications and for the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions abstracts. He has participated in numerous medical missions to Pakistan and the Middle East.

Mazen Noureddin, M.D. is the Director of Fatty Liver Program at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles with a focus on translational research, particularly in nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). Dr. Noureddin has conducted investigational, translational and clinical studies of novel treatments for nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) and helped to validate a new liver-imaging technique: MRI-proton density fat fraction (MRI-PDFF).

Dr. Noureddin completed his residency at the University of Southern California (USC), GI fellowship at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) and Hepatology fellowship at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He currently active in a number of clinical studies investigating new drug treatments for NASH, researching the translational pathogenesis of NAFLD/NASH and is deeply engaged in novel liver biomarker. He has conducted several original studies that have been featured in publications such as Gastroenterology, Hepatology, The American Journal of Gastroenterology, among many others

Zaki Lababidi, M.D., the founder of Gilbert Cardiology, has over 20 years of experience in cardiovascular medicine. He is board certified in cardiovascular disease and is specialized in interventional cardiology. Dr. Lababidi’s research work has been published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology Intervention and Lancet. Dr. Lababidi is very active in supporting humanitarian efforts for his fellow Syrians, both those abroad and those that remain in war-ravaged Syria. He is the President of the Arizona chapter of the SAMS and did serve as co-chair at the 4th Annual SAMS National Conference. He and his fellow conference attendees raised $2 million to benefit the medical and humanitarian efforts of SAMS. He currently serves on the SAMS Advocacy Committee and the Cardiology Committee. He has headed the SAMS Cardiology missions to Amman, Jordan in July and November 2016.

Mahmoud Hariri, M.D. has been a trauma surgeon in Syria. He is joining HHI through the Scholars at Risk (SAR) program. As a member of an international network of participating universities, Harvard SAR has provided sanctuary to dozens of professors, lecturers, researchers, writers, and other intellectuals
who are at risk. Dr. Hariri is a surgeon and former faculty member of Aleppo University Faculty of Medicine. Since the start of the war, he has dedicated his life to providing trauma care to all in need, as well as training junior physicians under his supervision to do the same. In addition, Dr. Hariri was the Director of Research for the Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations and was a focal point for most NGOs operating inside Syria. In this role, he led a nationwide survey of hospitals to identify their capacity to provide trauma care. We published that study in JAMA SURGERY this past June.

Mahmoud Houmsee, M.D. is an Associate Professor of cardiovascular medicine at the Ohio State University Medical Center. He is board certified in cardiology and clinical electrophysiology. His interest is arrhythmia management including ablation and cardiac electronic implantable device.

Rache Mureau-Haines is a Nurse Practitioner who is currently completing a Cardiovascular Fellowship at University of Washington. She is a former Afya Bora Fellow at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where she completed research on pediatric HIV treatment outcomes in Western Kenya. She has volunteered with organizations in Kenya, Tanzania, and Turkey as well as with locally underserved populations in Washington State.

Michael J. Adelman works professionally as an environmental engineer, and has volunteered for health care enrollment outreach for the last three Open Enrollment periods. His experience includes preparing and disseminating outreach material; coordinating outreach efforts; explaining health care options to the general public; staffing enrollment events; and leading educational workshops.

Amal Katrib is a doctoral candidate in Biomedical Physics at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. Funded by the NIH-NCI Big Data to Knowledge (BD2K) initiative and the Eugene Cota-Robles diversity fellowship. She is leading an integrative medicine project, leveraging tools from transcriptomics and neuroimaging to elucidate molecular processes implicated in glioblastoma. She has a B.Sc. in Biomedical Engineering (Biophysics minor) and a M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering and has most recently worked as a nuclear instrumentation and control engineer. As the founder of SAHA (“Health” in Arabic – www.eSAHA.org), she is working alongside her team to develop a centralized and comprehensive telemedicine platform connecting Syrian refugees and displaced individuals with Arabic-speaking physicians for virtual medical consultations and follow-ups.
Mary A. Lehman is an Attorney At-Law living in the Mountains of Southern California. She has been named a California “Super Lawyer” eight years in a row and was recently named among the Top 25 Women Attorneys in San Diego, CA. She has her own practice, with a certified specialty by the California State Bar in civil writs and appeals. In her capacity as an Emergency Medical Technician, Ms. Lehman has volunteered twice as a medic in the refugee crisis in Greece, including serving with SAMS Global Response in Thessaloniki. She is also a volunteer attorney with Advocates Abroad, providing legal aid to refugees in Greece and continues to assist people remotely since leaving Greece. Her community activities include Vice-Chair of the California Athletic Commission, leadership in the World Affairs Council of the Desert and a Master in the San Diego Appellate Inns of Court.

Ammar Hatahet is dually board certified in Internal Medicine and Obesity Medicine in solo private practice with primary emphasis on Diabetes and Weight Loss. During his tenure on the academic faculty at Wayne State University from 1994 to 2003, he served as director of Ambulatory Practices and Interim Chief of General Internal Medicines. He also directed the Medical Weight Loss Program and was involved with clinical research surrounding diabetes and weight loss. After that he was recruited to be the Director of the Primacy Care Initiative at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Since 2004, Dr. Hatahet has been in private practice but he still teaches residents and students from Michigan State University. Armed with MPH in health management and Policy from the University of Michigan and additional involvement in practice initiatives such as Improving Performance in Practice initiative (IPIP), Dr. Hatahet’s practice has been continuously designated a Patient Centered Medical Home since July of 2010. Dr. Hatahet continues to be involved with teaching and research and has served as the Director of Clinical Research at McLaren Oakland from January 2011 to June 2016. In addition, Dr. Hatahet has been the Chairperson of the corporate wide McLaren HealthCare Institutional Review Board since February 2012.

Ahmad Tarakji, M.D. is the President of the Syrian American Medical Society. Dr. Tarakji is also a current Board member of the SAMS Foundation. Dr. Tarakji is a cardio-thoracic surgeon in California, and a former clinical assistant professor at Stanford University. At SAMS, he spearheads and participates in numerous initiatives, including providing trauma and critical care courses for Syrian physicians and nurses, overseeing SAMS’s advocacy work, chairing the two previous SAMS International Conferences in Turkey, the International Conference in Sarajevo, Bosnia, and the most recent National Conference in
Boston. Dr. Tarakji leads SAMS partnerships with UN agencies and NGOs to expand the Whole of Syria (WoS) response plan and efforts to address medical emergencies in Syria. Dr. Tarakji also leads SAMS partnerships with Universities in the U.S. and Europe to establish education, relief, and post-crisis rebuilding programs for Syria.

Catherine Ireland, M.D. has dedicated her career to providing services for those with limited access to healthcare. In addition to providing care to Americans in need, she has organized, and been a physician on, medical deployments to Greece, Germany, and Jordan to care for refugees. She founded Integrated Relief, an organization that educates people about options for treating pain and incorporating it into primary care. As an Artis Research Fellow, she studies treatment of mental and physical stress and pain in those who are currently, or previously, in conflict zones. She owns To Your Points in Brooklyn, NY, and provides complementary and alternative medicine for pain management.

Her unique training includes acupuncture (Phoenix Institute of Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture), as well as anesthesiology (University of Connecticut Health Center), surgery (Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center), naturopathy (Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine), molecular biology (University of California, Berkeley) and yoga (Southwest Institute of Healing Arts). She is presently a licensed naturopathic physician in California and a licensed acupuncturist in New York.

Bayanne Mihtar is the Director of Syrian Community Network-San Diego, a community based refugee support network focused on supporting Syrian refugees in their resettlement in the Greater San Diego Area. By education and profession Bayanne is an interior designer but has found her passion in redesigning the lives of the weak, battered and unfortunate refugees.

David Murphy has been the Executive Director for the International Rescue Committee's San Diego office since April 2015, before he was the Country Director for the IRC in Ethiopia since August 2004. Previously David was a General Manager for an air freight company in Denver, Colorado. During his time there he gained valuable management and organizational development skills. After seven years in this position, he began to get bored, tired, burned out and hated Monday mornings. While thinking about his future course of action, a question was posed to him, “if money was no object, what would you do for a career”? David answered, “I want to lead photo safaris in Africa” and with this answer he moved to Africa and began to lead safaris. After one year of extensive travel around Southern and East Africa he began to look at the
aid, humanitarian, relief field. One day while on a break in between trips in Nairobi Kenya, David approached the IRC for a job. IRC had a job in the break away Republic of Somaliland (North Western Somalia). He began working as a volunteer and quickly moved up the management ladder (Project Manager, Program Coordinator, and Country Director). After four years in Somaliland, David took over the IRC Kenya office for almost one year. Then onward to Afghanistan for a short-term mission that turned into a 1½ year posting. Finally, he moved to Ethiopia for 10½ years.

Wasim Maziak is Professor and Chair of the Department of Epidemiology at Florida International University. His research focuses on tobacco control and cardiovascular health in developing countries, especially the study of waterpipe smoking. His work on the waterpipe provided some of the first evidence about addiction in waterpipe smokers, toxicants exposures associated with waterpipe use, and waterpipe’s unique characteristics relevant to waterpipe regulation and control. In 2002, he founded the Syrian Center for Tobacco Studies (SCTC), with funding from NIH. He has more than 100 peer-reviewed papers published about different aspects of the waterpipe epidemic and currently he holds 2 R01 grants from NIH to continue studying the waterpipe in the Middle East and U.S.
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