



**4TH NATIONAL  
SYMPOSIUM**  
OCTOBER 6-8  
**ANDAZ HOTEL**

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# SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY 4TH NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

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Lara Zakaria, RPh, MS, CNS

Ahmad Tarakji, MD

Basel Termanini, MD

Abdulfatah Elshaar, MD

## COORDINATORS

Tessa Jenks, SAMS Tristate Chapter Coordinator

Rima Abdulmajid, Program Assistant

## CONFERENCE LOCATION



Andaz Wall Street

75 Wall Street

New York, NY 10005, US

# PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6

4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.: Registration

6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.: Opening Ceremony

7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.: Reception

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

8:00 a.m.–9:10 a.m.: **Session 1:** Ongoing Projects, Successes and Challenges

9:10 a.m.–9:40 a.m.: **State of the Art Lecture #1:** Building a Residency Program with Available Resources

10:00 a.m.–10:40 p.m.: **Session 2:** Challenges and Opportunities

10:40 a.m.–12:00 p.m.: **Session 3:** Strengthening the System to Meet Population Health Needs

12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 p.m.–2:20 p.m.: **Session 4:** Data and Research Role in Future Syria

**State of the Art Lecture #2:** Early Findings from the FXB Partnership with SAMS

2:20 p.m.–3:15 p.m.: **Session 5:** Remote Education Pitfalls and Successes

3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.: **Session 6:** Looking Ahead

8:00 p.m.–11:00 p.m.: Gala

# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

### SESSION 1: ONGOING PROJECTS, SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

*Moderators: Amjad Rass, MD, and Aref Al Kali, MD*

- 8:00–8:10** Opening Remarks: The Importance of Education & Research, **Basel Termanini, MD**
- 8:10–8:30** Promise for Relief & Human Development, *A Grassroot Model of Higher Education Inside Syria*, **Suzanne Kawamleh, PhD**
- 8:30–8:50** Curriculum Development Training For Syrian Healthcare Educators: Successes and Challenges, **Tarif Bakdash, MD**
- 8:50–9:10** What Exists & What Has Worked: Recommendations from the Education Conference in Gaziantep, **Lina Murad, MD**

### STATE OF THE ART LECTURE #1

- 9:10–9:40** Building a Residency Program with Available Resources, **Conrad Fischer, MD**

**9:40–10:00** COFFEE BREAK

### SESSION 2: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

*Moderators: Basel Termanini, MD, and Ahmad Tarakji, MD*

- 10:00–10:20** Challenges & Opportunities for the Syrian Health Workforce: Work from The Syria Public Health Network, **Aula Abbara, MD**
- 10:20–10:40** Syrian Physicians Working Abroad, Licensing & Credentials, **Ibrahim Al-Masri, MD**

### SESSION 3: STRENGTHENING THE SYSTEM TO MEET POPULATION HEALTH NEEDS

- 10:40–11:00** Post Crisis Education, Where to Start, **Lynn Cohen**
- 11:00–11:25** Global Platform for Syrian Students, *Rebuilding from Within—Strengthening Human Resources for Health in War-torn Syria*, **Helena Barroco, PhD**
- 11:25–11:45** Health Care Systems in Transition, **Nedim Jaganjac, MD, MPH**
- 11:45–12:00** Panel Discussion

12:00–1:00 LUNCH

## SESSION 4 : DATA AND RESEARCH ROLE IN FUTURE SYRIA

*Moderators: Mohamed Sekkarie, MD, and Aula Abbara, MD*

### STATE OF THE ART LECTURE #2

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1:00–1:30 | Health & Conflict: Early Findings from the FXB Partnership with SAMS, <b>Satchit Balsari, MD, and Ranya Ahmad, PhD</b>  |
| 1:30–1:50 | Human Diagnosis Project: <i>Collective Intelligence &amp; Eventually Machine Learning and Bahmni: Open Source Hospital System</i> , <b>Joaquin Blaya, PhD</b> |
| 1:50–2:10 | The Lancet Commission on Syria: <i>Health in Conflict: Guidelines for Future Health Needs</i> , <b>Ahmad Tarakji, MD</b>                                      |
| 2:10–2:20 | Panel Discussion  |

## SESSION 5: REMOTE EDUCATION PITFALLS AND SUCCESSES

*Moderators: Hisham Bismar, DO, and Abdulfatah Elshaar, MD*

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 2:20–2:40 | Remote Medical Education, <b>Ahmad Almoujahed, MD</b>   |
| 2:40–3:10 | The Diabetes Care for Syria Project: Using Project Management Tools to Plan & Manage Progress, <b>Richard Wobbe, PhD, and M. Ihsan Kaadan, MD</b> |
| 3:10–3:25 | An ERP Correlate of Long-lasting Learning, <b>Ala'a El-Shaar</b>  |

3:25–3:40 COFFEE BREAK

## SESSION 6 : LOOKING AHEAD

*Moderators: Majd Isreb, MD, and Ahmad Tarakji, MD*

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 3:40–4:00 | Nurses & Allied Healthcare Crucial Role in Future Syria: <i>Instructional Design, Evaluation and Assessment</i> , <b>Elizabeth McLellan, RN, MPH</b> |
| 4:00–4:20 | The Six Steps Approach for Curriculum Development in Medical Education, <b>Sean Tackett, MD, MPH</b>   |
| 4:20–4:40 | Medics Training, <b>Timothy Tan, MD, and Samer Attar, MD</b>   |
| 4:40–5:00 | Panel Discussion   |

# CME STATEMENTS

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this program, participants should be able to:

- Describe strategies for creating a global platform for Syrian students and recall opportunities for medical residency programs
- Identify population health needs of Syria and approaches to improve health outcomes
- Recognize uses of data analysis in research, collective intelligence
- Identify benefits of telemedicine and discuss various augmented reality options
- Describe World Bank initiatives for recovery and reconstruction in Syria.

## 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. 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 7.0 *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.

**The course evaluation will be sent electronically via email.** Credit will be awarded within 3 weeks following the activity. Instructions will be emailed with how to obtain proof of your participation in an IUSM CME activity. For questions and concerns, please contact IU School of Medicine, Division of Continuing Medical Education at [cme@iu.edu](mailto:cme@iu.edu).

## SPEAKERS

### Ranya Ahmed, PhD

Dr. Ranya Ahmed is currently the Information Management Officer for the SAMS Foundation in Washington D.C., and a Research Fellow at Harvard University's FXB Center for Health and Human Rights. In January 2017, Ranya completed the University of Kansas Political Science doctoral program, specializing in quantitative methods, international relations and policy. She previously earned a Master's degree in International Studies, and an MPA, with an emphasis in nonprofit management.

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### Aula Abbara, MD

Dr. Aula Abbara is the Project Lead for the SAMS' response in Greece, which provides primary healthcare to refugees. Dr. Abbara teaches healthcare workers in Turkey on topics related to infectious diseases as part of SAMS's education programs. She is on the steering committee of the *Syria Public Health Network* and is an Infectious Diseases Clinician in the UK.

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### Samer Attar, MD

Dr. Samer Attar is an Assistant Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at Northwestern University. Since 2013, he has worked with the Syrian American Medical Society and the Aleppo City Medical Council and operated in underground hospitals in Aleppo. He was last in Aleppo in July 2016. Dr. Attar has also undergone several missions operating with Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres at the Jordanian-Syrian border.

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### Tarif Bakdash, MD, MHSC, MEHP Fellow, FAAN

Dr. Bakdash is an Associate Professor at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson. He is a Pediatric neurologist with additional specialties in epilepsy, movement disorders, and behavioral sleep disorders. Dr. Bakdash had an extensive training in multiple institutions, such as Harvard University, Cleveland Clinic, Baylor College, and Rush University. He also has a Master's Degree in Bioethics from the University of Toronto on a grant he received from the WHO. Currently, he is in his final year of Master of Education in the Health Professions at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Bakdash is a former Academic Coordinator at WHO in Syria and was the First Secretary General for People with disabilities in Syria. He had taught bioethics and communications skills at Damascus University for 7 years. He is the author of *Inside Syria: A Physician's Memoir*.

## **Satchit Balsari, MD , MPH**

Dr. Satchit Balsari is a Research Fellow at Harvard FXB. His research has contributed to advocating on behalf of vulnerable populations affected by disasters and humanitarian crises in Haiti, Jordan, and Bangladesh. Until recently, he served as the Director of the Global Emergency Medicine Program at Weill Cornell Medical College/ New York-Presbyterian Hospital. He is currently part of Professor Jennifer Leaning's team assessing the impact of the Syrian war on medicine and public health. He is teaching "Societal Response to Disaster and War" at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. His research has resulted in innovative applications of mobile, cloud-based technology to address public health challenges in mass gatherings, disasters, and humanitarian crises. Dr. Balsari's signature initiatives include project EMcounter (a customizable, portable digital surveillance tool) and Voices, a crowd-sourced, online disaster response analysis tool. In March 2017, Pranab Mukherjee, President of India, awarded him the prestigious 2016 Dr B.C. Roy National Award for outstanding services in the field of socio-medical relief.

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## **Helena Barroco, PhD**

Dr. Helena Barroco is a Portuguese Diplomat. Over the past few years, she has mainly worked on UN-related issues as the diplomatic adviser to former President of Portugal, Jorge Sampaio, focusing namely on the UN Alliance of Civilizations. She is now working on the Global Platform for Syrian Students as the Director of the Global Platform for Syrian Students, which is an emergency scholarship program launched by President Sampaio to support Syrian students struck by the conflict to finalize their university degrees. The organization's mission includes international advocacy for prioritizing higher education in emergency response. The Global Platform for Syrian Students works in a collaborative way through a Network of Partners, an Academic Consortium, and a Special Emergency Fund.

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## **Joaquin Blaya, PhD**

Dr. Blaya is currently at the Human Diagnosis Project and a Research Fellow at the Brigham & Women's Hospital. His work focuses on the use of IT in improving health care in resource poor settings and in promoting the use of open source software and open standards to improve local capacity building and interoperability between information systems. Prior to his, he was heading the Strategic Partnerships in the Global Health Division of ThoughtWorks, focusing on Bahmni, a hospital information system based on the open source tools OpenMRS, OpenERP, and OpenELIS. Previously, he founded a Chilean mHealth



company focuses on chronic disease. He is a Fellow at Harvard Medical School, Health IT moderator at GHDonline.org, and was on the Board of Directors of OpenMRS. He received his Master's Degree from MIT in rehabilitation and robotics, and his Ph.D. from the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences & Technology (HST).

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### **Lynn C. Cohen, MS**

Lynn C. Cohen holds a Master's Degree in International Education from the University of Pittsburgh. She began her professional life as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia, where she served as a teacher trainer at the Kakata Rural Teacher Training College, where she introduced active learning into the curriculum. She has consulted with UNICEF, UNESCO, and other international governmental and non-governmental organizations on issues related to education policy and practice; strategy and organizational change; and youth positive development. She worked in education in Bosnia and Herzegovina both during the war and in the post-war reconstruction period. Additionally, from 2003-2011, Lynn was adjunct faculty at American University in the International Training and Education Program, where she also served as the Associate Director for several years. Presently, she consults in education after returning from living abroad in Kazakhstan and Bangladesh.

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### **Ala'a El-Shaar, MS**

Ala'a El-Shaar attained a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Science & Psychology from Bridgewater State University in 2013. She then graduated from Boston University School of Medicine with a Master of Science degree in Anatomy & Neurobiology. Her involvement in Psychosocial mission work with refugee children over the last several years furthered her interests in areas of behavioral neuroscience and PTSD. Ala'a is currently working as a Lab Manager & Researcher in the Center for Translational Cognitive Neuroscience at the VA Boston Healthcare System, conducting research related to memory disorders, and serves as the New England Chapter Coordinator of SAMS.

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### **Abdulfatah Elshaar, MD, PhD**

Dr. Abdulfatah Elshaar received his undergraduate degree from the University of Rhode Island and then went on to obtain his MD and PhD in Anatomy and Neurobiology from Boston University School of Medicine. Dr. Elshaar completed his medical training in Internal Medicine at Brown University School of Medicine, in conjunction with Rhode Island Hospital. Dr. Elshaar established the Medical Associates of New England, LLC in 2002. He has more than 18 years

of experience practicing medicine, and has had a significant research career. His expertise extends into the classroom, where he has assisted in teaching courses at Boston University School of Medicine & Stonehill College. He has been involved in SAMS for over 10 years and currently serves as the SAMS New England Chapter President.

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### **Conrad Fischer, MD**

Dr. Conrad Fischer is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Physiology and Pharmacology at Touro College of Medicine in New York. He has taught USMLE and ABIM review courses nationally and internationally for 25 years. He has received 10 “Teacher Of The Year Awards.” He is the author of 10 textbooks and his “Master the Board” series for USMLE is being read by over 40,000 students every year. Dr Fischer is the Vice-Chairman of Medicine, Residency Program Director of Internal Medicine at Brookdale University Medical Center in Brooklyn. He has a Masters’ Degree in Theology and is Chair of the Ethic Committee. Recently, Dr .Fischer collaborated with the Angle Project to Produce “Lost and Guided,” an original play based on interviews and real life stories of Syrian refugees living in the United States.

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### **Nedim Jaganjac, MD, MPH**

Dr. Nedim Jaganjac is currently a consultant at the World Bank, Human Development Unit for the ECA region. Dr. Jaganjac has published many papers covering public health, including Book of Best Practices: Trauma and the Role of Mental Health in Post Conflict Recovery.

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### **M. Ihsan Kaadan, MD, MS**

Before moving to the U.S. in 2014, Dr. Ihsan worked with a local NGO providing primary care services for the displaced people in Aleppo, Syria. He also practiced medicine as a resident at Aleppo University Hospital after he graduated from medical school, University of Aleppo in 2012. Dr. Ihsan won multiple international awards for his work and writings during the Syrian crisis, including the prestigious Civil Society Leadership Award. Dr. Ihsan hold a Master’s Degree in International Health Policy & Management from Brandeis University, with a concentration on Health Systems Strengthening. He is currently doing research on cardiac arrhythmias at Massachusetts General Hospital.

## **Suzanne Kawamleh**

Suzanne Kawamleh is both a PhD student in Philosophy and an MA student in History at Indiana University-Bloomington, as well as the Higher Education Program Director at Promise for Relief and Human Development. She is interested in scientific models, error propagation, and Bayesian decision theory. She had worked on providing higher education opportunities to internally displaced populations in war-torn Syria, and is currently working on developing a long distance education program for Syrian students, expanding the current colleges to include a College of Engineering and a College of Health Sciences, and replicating the success of Hope Underground. Hope Underground is a collaboration with Valparaiso University and SAMS to establish the Ghouta Medical Institute, a 2-year laboratory and anesthesia program to train medical teams for field hospitals in Eastern Ghouta.

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## **Ibrahim Al-Masri, MD**

Dr. Ibrahim Al-Masri is a Syrian physician, forced to flee to Lebanon in 2012 due to the Syrian conflict. There, he cofounded the NGO Multi Aid Programs (MAPS), was MAPS manager of health programs and medical director of the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) in Lebanon. After four years in Lebanon, he now lives in Canada. Dr. Al-Masri embodies SAMS's mission of providing care to anyone in need. SAMS services in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey benefit refugees as well as the local community.

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## **Elizabeth McLellan, RN, MSN, MPH**

Elizabeth McLellan is the President and Founder of "Partners for World Health," an NGO based in The United States that is dedicated to improving health care around the world by improving the medical supply chain and coordinating medical missions in Africa, Asia, and South America to promote capacity building and training. McLellan received her Registered Nurse and BSN degrees from American University and Northeastern University and graduate degrees from University of Southern Maine and Boston University. Ms McLellan has traveled extensively, working as a leader in nursing and health care administration, around the world and in Syria where she led the training program for nurses. In recognition of her innovative leadership and compassion, Elizabeth has received numerous awards, from the Hanley Center for Health Leadership, and the Red Cross and SAMS

## **Ahmad Al-Moujahed, MD, MPH**

Dr. Al-Moujahed graduated from the Damascus University Faculty of Medicine in 2010 and holds an MPH from Northeastern University in Boston. He completed a research fellowship in the field of retina diseases at Massachusetts Eye and Ear (MEE), Harvard Medical School. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Boston University School of Medicine, carrying out his research at MEE. Dr. Al Moujahed is a member of the SAMS Education Committee. He has organized, helped, and taught multiple online courses directed to medical students and healthcare professionals in Syria. Some of these experiences were written and published in peer-reviewed journals.

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## **Lina Murad, MD**

Dr. Lina Murad, is an interventional nephrologist. She received her medical degree from Damascus University, did her training at Georgetown University and The George Washington University. She is involved in the care of Syrian patients with kidney disease and has co-published on the care of renal patients during conflicts in Kidney International, Clinical Nephrology, Nephron and other journals. She has lead multiple Training missions for the Dialysis Technicians and bio meds. She was a SAMS Board member and Secretary and presently works with the Education Committee.

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## **Sean Tackett, MD, MPH**

Dr. Sean Tackett, MPH is an internal medicine physician and Assistant Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center whose career interest is international medical education. He teaches Curriculum Development for Medical Education in the Johns Hopkins faculty development program and has conducted curriculum development consultation and workshops in China, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam. His previous medical education research has emphasized students' perceptions of their learning environments, and included collaborators from China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Israel, and Brazil, and he currently researches medical education technologies. He also provides consultation to the World Federation for Medical Education on its accreditation standards for medical schools.

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## **Ahmad Tarakji, MD**

Dr. Ahmad Tarakji is the President of the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), as well as 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, and spearheading SAMS's partnerships with UN agencies, NGOs, and universities in the U.S. and Europe supporting post-crisis rebuilding programs for Syria.

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### **Basel Termanini, MD**

Dr. Basel Termanini is the the SAMS Vice President and the Chairman of SAMS Fundraising and Media Committees. Dr. Termanini was born and raised in Aleppo, Syria, and completed his medical education both in Aleppo and the United States. In 1997 he started his GI practice in Steubenville, OH and is currently part of Trinity Health system there. Dr. Termanini has been active in the humanitarian and medical relief efforts in Syria and has visited northern Syria and Turkey seven times since 2013 on SAMS-led medical missions.

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### **Richard Wobbe, PhD**

A biochemist by training, Dr. Wobbe worked for 20 years in pharmaceutical and biotechnology R&D, holding positions including Research Fellow (Merck), Director of Biology (ArQule), Senior Director of R&D (Anadys, Baxter Healthcare) and Vice President of R&D (XTL Biopharmaceuticals) as well as working as an independent consultant for biotech start-ups. He led research programs that discovered novel drug candidates for herpes virus, bacterial and fungal infections, first-in-class NS5A inhibitors that clear HCV infections, and an inhalable insulin.

In 2008, Rick refocused his career on science education and social responsibility. As an educator, he has taught high school, undergraduate and graduate level courses, advised undergraduate researcher students and served as Director of Education Programs for InnovaTID Pharmaceutical Consulting, where he oversaw career-training programs for biomedical graduate students interested in healthcare professions. His social responsibility work has included serving as Volunteer Leader for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Worcester, for which he earned a Citation from the Massachusetts State Senate and leading a project for the Council on American-Islamic Relations-Massachusetts to recognize Ramadan in supermarket advertising. He currently works as a volunteer Program Director for the Syrian American Medical Society's Diabetes Care for Syria Project, which focuses on alleviating the shortage of diabetes supplies in Syria.



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# THE SYRIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY

**7th National Conference**

Orlando, Florida  
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## NOTES

## NOTES

## NOTES

## NOTES



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