

MWIA Centennial Congress Report

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Congress Website: amwa-doc.org/mwia100



Group photo on the steps of Borough Hall

Credit: Digital Film Work

The American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) was honored to host the [Centennial Congress of the Medical Women's International Association](#) at the Brooklyn Bridge Marriott. Over 1200 delegates and attendees from more than 50 countries were represented, with more than 140 speakers and more than 270 scientific posters.

The energy, camaraderie, and friendship within this international gathering of medical women was visibly palpable.

UN EVENT AND OPENING RECEPTION

The Congress launched on Thursday, July 25, 2019 with a special United Nations side event, [“Women’s Health: Building Blocks for Sustainable Development Goals”](#) in sponsorship with the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations, and The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Distinguished speakers included H.E. Penelope A. Beckles, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations; Mr. Satya Rodrigo, Charge’d’affaires a.i. Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations; Dr. Chantal Line Carpentier, head of UNCTAD, Dr. Jillian Farmer, Director of the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety at the UN; Dr. Vanessa Kerry, CEO of Seed Global Health; NASA Scientist [Dr. Camille Wardrop Alleyne](#); Carlos Garcia Former Ambassador of El Salvador to the UN; Simone Monesabian, head of UNODC; activist and writer [Ruchira Gupta](#), and author and philanthropist [David Roosevelt](#) (grandson of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt). The event was organized by Dr. Padmini Murthy, MWIA Vice President of North America. View the [video recording](#).

Regional meetings and dinner were held at St. Francis College as colleagues from the eight MWIA regions gathered to reconnect and plan for the upcoming triennium.

The Opening Reception featured beautiful performances by Dr. Mary Rorro, who composed the [MWIA Centennial Theme Song](#), and singer, guitarist Tessany Azizi as well as an amazing story slam hosted by [Elizabeth Métraux, Founder of Women Writers in Medicine](#) and featuring [Dr. Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber](#), [Dr. Heather Furnas](#), [Dr. Oneeka Williams](#), and [Dr. Arghavan Salles](#).

Music gave way to dancing, and later in the evening, attendees tapped into their creative selves through AMWA’s annually hosted paint night.



Speakers at the United Nations side event

Credit: Africa Photo Communications

OPENING CEREMONY AND PLENARIES

The opening ceremony opened with welcomes from MWIA President [Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer](#) and AMWA President [Dr. Roberta Gebhard](#). A history panel with MWIA Presidents [Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer](#), [Dr. Afua Hesse](#), and [Dr. Kyung Ah Park](#) summarized MWIA’s legacy over the past century and recognized on stage

over 40 national association leaders from across 6 continents, a powerful display of unity among women physicians from diverse cultural backgrounds.



MWIA executives with national association leaders

Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

Following this presentation was an inspiring fireside chat with prominent leaders in healthcare within the United States -- [Dr. Danielle Ofri](#), award-winning physician author; [Dr. Darilyn Moyer](#), EVP and CEO of the American College of Physicians; and [Dr. Helen Burstin](#), EVP and CEO of the Council of Medical Specialty Societies -- moderated by [Laurie Cooke](#), CEO of the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association.



L-R:
Laurie Cooke, Dr. Helen Burstein, Dr. Danielle Ofri, Dr. Darilyn Moyer
Photos Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

TIME'S UP Healthcare Founders, Gloria Steinem, & Dr. Gayatri Devi

The Linda Brodsky Memorial Lecture was delivered by TIME'S UP Healthcare founding members [Dr. Esther Choo](#) and [Dr. Dara Kass](#) who spoke on the need to end gender discrimination and harassment within the healthcare sector. They were joined on-stage by the larger group of founding members, all wearing signature black to represent the TIME'S UP movement in a statement of solidarity. The morning session culminated with an unforgettable conversation with renowned activist, author, and feminist, [Gloria Steinem](#), hosted by AMWA Past President [Dr. Gayatri Devi](#). The privilege of learning "life lessons from Gloria" and

hearing firsthand her perspectives on gender, equity, and women's leadership were truly a highlight of the conference.



Gloria Steinem (L) with Dr. Gayatri Devi (R) Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

BREAKOUT TRACKS

Three breakout tracks included scientific sessions on global health, gender equity, work-life balance, violence against women, women's health, leadership and professional development, maternal health, healthcare innovation, obesity, sexual harassment, sex and gender specific medicine, and women physicians as ambassadors of change. Workshops and special sessions allowed a deeper dive into topics on graduate medical education, lesbian and transgender health, professional development, gender bias, presentation skills, social media, Native American healthcare, burnout, work-life balance, and mental health. MWIA was also honored to welcome [Dr. Gigi Osler](#), President of the Canadian Medical Association and great great grandniece of [Sir William Osler](#).

View the digital [program book](#), [photos](#), and [videos](#) (coming soon!).



Dr. Gigi Osler Credit: Digital Film Work

CENTENNIAL GALA

The Centennial Gala honored women physicians in uniformed service from around the world as well as newly inducted AMWA fellows. Performances included global premieres of [Barbara Callandar's](#) play *Women Doctors: Unite to Heal the World!* and [Sarah Partridge's](#) song "[Courage is a Woman](#)," both of whom told the inspiring story of MWIA's first president, [Dr. Esther Pohl Lovejoy](#). A mesmerizing sand art show by Ha Jun Kim from Korea and dance performances by member associations from around the world concluded a truly remarkable evening.



Sand Art Performance by Ha Jun Kim
Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

CLOSING PLENARIES, AWARDS, AND CLOSING CEREMONY

Closing plenary speakers included [Dr. Kate Prior](#) on imposter syndrome, [Dr. Florence Manguyu](#) on MWIA's role in global health, [Dr. Suzy Feigofsky](#) on physician burnout, and [Rebekah Apple](#) on trust and communication in healthcare. The closing Awards Ceremony honored the following luminaries in healthcare (read details about the [MWIA](#) and [AMWA](#) Awardees):

MWIA Honorary Members:

Dr. Cisca Griffioen (Northern Europe)	Dra. Rebeca Kuniyoshi (Latin America)
Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer (Central Europe)	Dr. Usha Saraiya (Central Asia)
Dr. Christiane Pouliart (Southern Europe)	Dr. Shafika Nasser (Near East and Africa)
Dr. Satty Gill Keswani (North America)	Dr. Bong Ok Kim (Western Pacific)
Dr. Robyn Hewland (Individual Member)	

MWIA Member of Honour: DAK Foundation (Australia)

MWIA Lovejoy Scholarship: Dr. Dabota Yvonne Buowari

MWIA Golden Jubilee Members: Dr. Elinor Christiansen and Dr. Satty Keswani, and others (not present)

AMWA Awards: Visit this link: [AMWA](#)

POSTER WINNERS

The following posters winners were recognized within each division:

Physician Division

First Place: "*Mother's Mind Matters: Unique Attempt to Provide Urgent Psychiatric Care to Depressed Perinatal Women within a Psychiatry Residency Program.*" Authors: Tareen RS, Kothari C, Gross K, Liepman M.

Second Place: "*Effectiveness and Feasibility of Lung Cancer Screening Using Network System with Computer-Aid Nodule Detection Program for Implementing in Population.*" Authors: Kim Y, Lee CW.

Third Place: "*Increase in the Childhood Thyroid Cancer Incidence Rate in Fukushima Prefecture after the Accident at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.*" Authors: Sakiyama H, Yoshida Y.

Resident Division

First Place: "*The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Reproductive Age Filipino-Muslim*

Women And Their Knowledge, Attitude, And Practices Regarding Family Planning in Northern Mindanao Medical Center: A Cross-sectional Study.” Authors: Lucman FM, Alonsabe MOV, Diawatan MMF.

Second Place: *“A Decade-Long Analysis of Gender Parity in Gastroenterology Fellowship Programs’ Leadership, Trainees, and Applicants in North America from 2008-2019.”* Authors: Tse CS; Nguyen H, Hinds P, Shaliesha K,* Haq M, Moss S, Bhagra A.

Third Place: *“Head and Neck Injuries Observed in Violence Against Women.”* Authors: Gn NT, Fi K, Diarra Y, Timbo Sk.

Student Division

First Place: *“The Relationship Between Barriers to Help-Seeking and Health Issues Among South Asian Immigrant Victims of Intimate Partner Violence.”* Authors: Shah A, Sabri B.

Second Place: *“Inflammatory Breast Cancer Masked as Puerperal Mastitis.”* Authors: Miller KJ, Ludwig KK, Bell MC, Loncharich AJ.

Third Place: *“A Patient’s Voice Guides Treatment of Pregnancy-Associated Breast Cancer.”* Authors: Huang C, Gehring V, Powell K, Newton E.

CONCLUSION

MWIA President [Dr. Bettina Pleiderer](#) (Germany) concluded her presidential term, and incoming President [Dr. Clarissa Fabre](#) (United Kingdom) delivered her inaugural speech, outlining her goals and areas of focus for the next triennium. Dr. Shelley Ross concluded 12 years of exemplary service as MWIA Secretary General and AMWA leader, Dr. Padmini Murthy assumed the position as new Secretary General. The next MWIA Congress will be held in Taiwan in 2022.

The MWIA Centennial Congress was a wonderful opportunity for women physicians across the globe to come together, reflect on shared history, exchange medical knowledge, and build collegial relationships. This Congress also marks the beginning of yet another century of collaboration among medical women around the world.

SPECIAL MEETING EXHIBITS



Map showing distribution of attendees (above)

MWIA Centennial Quilt (right)

Photos credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography





International Teddy Bear Exhibit representing over 12 countries from around the world.

Art display inspired by Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum (not pictured).

Photo credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

MWIA RECOGNIZED IN THE UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

On Friday, August 2, 2019, just after the close of the Congress, [United States Congresswoman Dr. Kim Schrier](#) entered the following remarks in the [United States Congressional Record](#).

“Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Medical Women’s International Association (MWIA), one of the oldest international professional organizations, representing women doctors worldwide.

In 1919 New York City, American physician, Dr. Esther Pohl Lovejoy, along with international colleagues from 16 nations, founded MWIA and became its first President. Over the century, MWIA has grown to encompass over 80 countries as either national associations, like the American Medical Women’s Association, or as individual members.

One hundred years ago, there were very few women in the medical field. Organizations like MWIA provided support for women in medicine and more importantly provided a community for them to share medical knowledge as well as promote collegiality around the world. At the time of MWIA’s founding, a major challenge for women was the accessibility of medical education. Fortunately, this obstacle has been overcome in many nations. The sacrifice of these earlier trailblazing doctors helped pave the way for future ones like me.

Yet the number of women in senior leadership positions shows that the work of MWIA is far from over. By investing in women physicians, MWIA provides the network and support system to mentor and advocate for future leaders in the medical field. In addition, MWIA works to improve the health of women worldwide, advocating for gender specific healthcare, promoting equity, and addressing social determinants of health.

Congratulations again to the MWIA for their 100 years of important work. Their tireless work to open doors for women in medicine has improved the health of generations of women, men and children around the world, and for that, we all are grateful.”

View Dr. Schrier’s remarks in the [United States Congressional Record](#).