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ANNUAL  
REPORT

02 / 03

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# INTRODUCTION



**Dear OMI faculty, fellows, and friends,**

The year 2021 began as 2020 ended, with the COVID-19 pandemic dominating our daily life. The infection rates and death toll were rising worldwide and successful treatment options, such as vaccines or antibody drugs, were either scarce or not available in many countries. People were divided between those who believed in the COVID-19 restrictions implemented by authorities and those who worried about their loss of freedom.

Despite these global challenges, the Open Medical Institute pursued its mission of improving healthcare worldwide. We did not put our efforts on hold, but rather developed innovative solutions to ensure that medical education beyond borders continued.

With constantly changing COVID-19 regulations such as lockdowns, quarantine, and travel bans, it was impossible at times to run in-person seminars in Salzburg. We adapted the educational program accordingly and converted the seminars to virtual courses – OMIinars. With the help of many devoted faculty members, we were able to offer 21 OMIinars to hundreds of fellows who were eager to connect virtually across borders and time zones. Participants were extremely grateful for this extraordinary learning opportunity, enabling them to expand their medical knowledge despite travel restrictions. When travel bans were lifted, we resumed face-to-face seminars at Schloss Arenberg in Salzburg. During the summer and fall, we held 17 regular OMI seminars. Attendees appreciated the return to in-person interaction and the ability to exchange ideas, opinions, and scientific data. In addition, we relaunched the OMI observership program. Throughout 2021, the OMI conducted 38 seminars, training 1,180 fellows from 63 different countries.

This past year also brought a new OMI design, reflected in the OMI image brochure. The OMI blog, the quarterly OMI newsletter, and a powerful database allow us to continually stay in touch with the OMI community.

In 2021, we strengthened our partnership with Alianza Médica para la Salud (AMSA), the OMI's sister organization in Mexico, by expanding the range of offered seminars for Latin American physicians. This important milestone is only possible due to the commitment from the OMI's academic partner institutions who are willing to provide faculty for the OMI MEX program. The OMI also expanded its partnership network via memoranda of understanding in Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Bulgaria, and Croatia, and celebrated 25 years of collaboration with the Open Medical Community Kyrgyzstan.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all OMI course directors, faculty members, mentors, and partners for their tremendous flexibility and commitment. A special thanks goes to Stephanie Faschang and her team. Without their tireless effort, we could not have fulfilled our mission during such a difficult time as the COVID-19 crisis. The OMI continued to bring together medical professionals who have one thing in common: the desire and will to improve healthcare globally. The OMI is pleased to be a light during this turbulent time and is grateful for your support.

**Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD**  
CEO | Open Medical Institute

# OPEN MEDICAL INSTITUTE MEDICAL EDUCATION BEYOND BORDERS

## BRIDGING THE GAP IN MEDICINE

The Open Medical Institute (OMI) is an international initiative for medical professionals, which through education and research, aims to improve healthcare on a global scale. Fellows trained by the OMI are enabled to significantly improve healthcare delivery in their own countries. The program was founded in 1993 by the American Austrian Foundation (AAF), the Open Society Foundations (OSF), and physicians from Weill Cornell Medicine to train doctors from countries in transition. Over the past decades, many leading medical institutions in the United States and Europe have joined this initiative by providing highly committed faculty who donate their time and expertise, sharing knowledge and experience with colleagues from around the world. Since 1993, the OMI has awarded more than 25,000 fellowships to medical professionals from 129 different countries, to whom more than 3,400 observerships in Austrian and American hospitals have been granted.

## PROMOTING BRAIN GAIN PREVENTING BRAIN DRAIN

The migration of healthcare professionals from low- and middle-income countries to high-income countries is the greatest impediment to medical progress worldwide. Many healthcare facilities in Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa lack qualified staff, equipment, and supplies. Healthcare workers in these regions do not have access to state-of-the-art knowledge, technology, and continuing education that is available in Western, more developed nations. As a result, many leave their home countries, which causes serious labor shortages and consequently threatens the functioning of the local healthcare systems. To prevent brain drain and initiate lasting brain gain, the OMI offers a variety of short-term postgraduate programs. After participation, fellows return to their home countries equipped with cutting-edge medical information, tips and tricks from the most experienced specialists, and an international network of colleagues whom they may consult with for the rest of their careers.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE CAPACITY BUILDING

The OMI follows a four-step approach offering access to state-of-the-art medical knowledge through seminars and webinars in different medical specialties, experience exchange through observerships at Austrian and American hospitals, and capacity building through satellite symposia and visiting professorships, which bring international expertise to the fellows' home institutions. The fourth step includes a multidisciplinary leadership program to complement the clinical education and enable OMI alumni to take on leadership positions in their home countries. All OMI educational opportunities consist of short-term fellowships, which last a minimum of one week and a maximum of three months. Thus, fellows remain integrated in their home institutions, but due to the OMI programs, gain access to faculty and colleagues from all over the world.



**AUGUSTINE M.K.  
CHOI, MD**

**Weill Cornell  
Medicine**



**JAMES M. CALLAHAN,  
MD**

**Children's Hospital  
of Philadelphia**



**MARKUS MÜLLER,  
MD**

**Medical University  
of Vienna**



The Open Medical Institute seminars are vital to enhancing medical knowledge and quality healthcare around the world. Weill Cornell Medicine is strongly committed and incredibly proud of its partnership with the OMI, which now stretches across more than 28 years and includes a total of 421 courses. It is always a highlight for our faculty to participate in the Salzburg Weill Cornell seminars, one of our major international initiatives, and an honor for them to interact and share their expertise with physicians from diverse national backgrounds. We look forward to building on our years of collaboration and continuing to transform global medical education together.

CHOP faculty have traveled to Salzburg in collaboration with the OMI for almost 30 years. During more than 140 pediatric seminars, we have shared our expertise with fellows from around the world. We have taught but we have also learned from the friends we have met. We are privileged to help our colleagues provide outstanding pediatric care. OMI fellows have joined us in Philadelphia as observers. CHOP faculty have supported OMI satellite symposia abroad. With AMSA, we have offered seminars in Mexico (OMI MEX). The educational platform CHOP OPEN (open.chop.edu) grew from our work with the OMI. Our partnerships have been fruitful for both physicians and the children they serve. In 2021, CHOP faculty participated in five OMInars and two live courses. Our OMI partnerships remain major programs of emphasis for our Global Pediatric Education work. We are grateful to the OMI, supporters like the Leir Foundation who make our work possible, and to the fellows who are our treasured colleagues. We look forward to more collaboration in the years ahead.


The Medical University of Vienna cherishes its decades long collaboration with the OMI and is proud to support the initiative's values and goals. Since this joint endeavor began, more than 240 faculty members from the Medical University of Vienna have been involved in over 300 seminars and OMInars. In addition, the Medical University of Vienna has hosted more than 2,000 clinical observerships and has had faculty involved in 42 OMI satellite symposia around the world. These collaborations have also strengthened our international partnerships with leading American institutions including Weill Cornell Medicine, the Hospital for Special Surgery, the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Cleveland Clinic, Columbia University, and Duke University Medical Center. Throughout 2021, faculty from the Medical University of Vienna co-directed seven OMI seminars and nine OMInars.

**Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean  
Weill Cornell Medicine  
Provost for Medical Affairs  
Cornell University**

**Medical Director of Global Pediatric  
Education  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
Professor of Clinical Pediatrics  
Perelman School of Medicine  
University of Pennsylvania**

**Dean  
Medical University of Vienna**





**DAVID G. PFISTER, MD**

**Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center**

In 2021, we ran one MSKCC OMIinar in Hematologic Malignancies. While our faculty missed being in Salzburg and the face-to-face interactions with the fellows, the OMIinar format allowed us to enlarge the involved faculty, so each lecture could be given by an even-more specialized content expert on the topic, who then also joined for the relevant case discussions. Since 1997, we have conducted 38 courses, and this program has distinguished itself as an outstanding and highly valued educational offering within our International Center. For me, it has been a great privilege to serve as the OMI program director at MSKCC for over a decade, during which time I have been in Salzburg multiple times. I and my MSKCC colleagues have seen first-hand the gratifying impact the OMI seminars have on the professional growth of the fellows, who greatly benefit from the highly interactive, disease-specific format.

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**Professor of Medicine**  
**Weill Cornell Medicine**  
**Member and Attending Physician**  
**Chief, Head and Neck Oncology**  
**Service, Department of Medicine**  
**Associate Deputy Physician-In-Chief**  
**Strategic Partnerships**  
**Memorial Sloan Kettering**  
**Cancer Center**




**JENNIFER A. BRAINARD, MD**

**Cleveland Clinic**

Cleveland Clinic is pleased to be a partner in education with the OMI. The OMI has been one of our institution's international programs since 2007. During this time, we have given 33 courses in Cardiac Surgery and Pathology. In 2021, we led a seminar in Cardiac Surgery and an OMIinar in Pathology. Feedback from our faculty highlights the OMI seminars as one of our single best teaching experiences. I share this opinion and have found the OMI fellows to be the most engaged and enthusiastic learners I have encountered. The OMI offers a truly unique venue for education, allowing us to immerse ourselves in a week of teaching what we love. I value getting to know the fellows throughout the week and keeping in touch with many after the course ends. None of this would be possible without the leadership and vision of the OMI. I am grateful to play a small role in this important cause.

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**Vice Chair for Pathology Operations**  
**Pathology Department**  
**Cleveland Clinic**




**RICHARD A. POLIN, MD**

**Columbia University**

Columbia University has been a partner with the OMI for more than 20 years. During that time, we have organized 45 seminars in Salzburg (Internal Medicine, Diabetes, and Maternal and Infant Health) and have participated in more than 15 satellite symposia in the fellows' home countries. In addition, we have recently run in-person and virtual OMI MEX seminars with AMSA in Mexico. These seminars are considered some of the most important international educational programs at Columbia University. As a participant in every one of the Maternal and Infant Health seminars, my professional and academic life has been enriched. Notably, every seminar provides the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue between the faculty and fellows. We get frequent questions from former fellows about challenging cases in their hospitals in addition to greetings at holiday time. The goal of the OMI to prevent brain drain has certainly been accomplished by the OMI seminars. I have left each seminar with new friendships and with a positive feeling that the OMI is making a difference in healthcare.

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**William T. Speck Professor of Pediatrics**  
**Columbia University Vagelos College**  
**of Physicians and Surgeons**  
**Executive Vice Chairman**  
**Department of Pediatrics**  
**NewYork-Presbyterian**  
**Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital**



**JOHN W. RAGSDALE III, MD**

**Duke University Medical Center**

The Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at Duke University has enjoyed a long and rich relationship with the OMI that has endured for decades. The cultural exchange of ideas and evolving needs of our patients globally drive our desire to improve and innovate our curriculum for the next generation of primary care providers. We are currently engaged with faculty at Duke and in Austria to update our curriculum to reflect the need to care for patients throughout their lives in more meaningful ways. It is indeed an exciting time for Duke and the OMI as we look beyond our seminars in Salzburg to include other locations, such as Mexico, and opportunities to grow our relationship. Duke is excited to be a part of the OMI family and looks forward to many decades of teaching and learning to come.

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**Associate Professor of Family**  
**Medicine and Community Health**  
**Division Chief of the Department**  
**of Family Medicine**  
**Duke University Medical Center**




**MONICA SALA, PHD**

**Institut Pasteur**

Since 2017, the Institut Pasteur has benefited from a valuable international partnership with the OMI. This cooperation made it possible to organize a total of four seminars on topics of primary relevance in global health, such as the emergence of pandemics, vector-borne diseases, and the health crisis linked to COVID-19. In 2021, despite the pandemic, we were able to run one Institut Pasteur course in Salzburg on the subject of viruses, liver and cancers. This partnership provides the Institut Pasteur with a unique training opportunity for scientists from the 32 member institutes of the Institut Pasteur International Network. It is an exceptional experience for our researchers to meet with physicians from the OMI network. The seminar format is designed in every detail to promote long-term interdisciplinary exchanges. In alignment with the common objective of the Institut Pasteur and the OMI, this partnership is a great opportunity for researchers from the Pasteur Network to contribute to the improvement of global health.

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**Director of the Education Department**  
**Institut Pasteur**



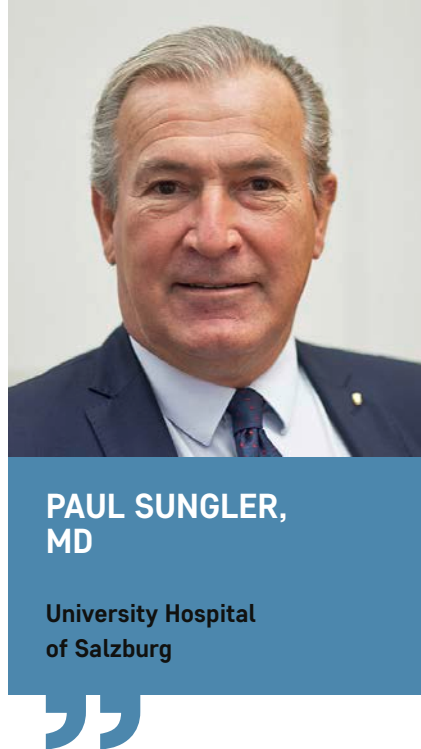
**MATHIAS BOSTROM, MD, FACS**

**Hospital for Special Surgery**

The past two years have been difficult in many ways as the world battled against a virus we have never seen before. At the Hospital for Special Surgery, not only have we continued to provide excellent patient care, but we have remained resilient and connected in creative ways to continue to provide the most current orthopedic education and knowledge to our fellows. One of the virtual international programs supported by HSS was the Bone and Joint Surgery OMIinar in April 2021. Since 1997, there have been a total of 26 seminars, and I have had the honor to be a part of most of them since inception. The past decades demonstrate the extraordinary partnership HSS has with the OMI and how this partnership is integral to our work in providing the best orthopedic education globally. I am privileged to have the opportunity to lead the seminars. We are grateful for the dedication and support of our amazing faculty and the excitement of the fellows in their pursuit of knowledge. I look forward to reuniting in person with our colleagues at the OMI and to future collaborations.

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**Chief of Adult Reconstruction**  
**and Joint Replacement Service**  
**Salvati Professor of Orthopedic Surgery**  
**Weill Cornell Medicine**  
**Attending Surgeon**  
**Hospital for Special Surgery**



**PAUL SUNGLER,  
MD**

**University Hospital  
of Salzburg**



**KATARZYNA  
CZABANOWSKA, PHD**

**Maastricht  
University**



**ERNST EBER,  
MD, ATSF, FERS**

**Medical University  
of Graz**

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Since the Open Medical Institute began, the University Hospital of Salzburg has been excited to take part in this outstanding program. More than 120 faculty members from our institution have taught in more than 200 seminars, resulting in over 550 faculty course participations. More than 120 young physicians from Salzburg have had the opportunity to attend the OMI seminars as fellows. Furthermore, the University Hospital of Salzburg has hosted more than 820 OMI observers thus far and has been involved in 18 satellite symposia in the fellows' home countries. It has been an honor and very rewarding to see such an impact over the years. We are eager to continue this long-standing partnership with the OMI.

It has been another successful year of academic partnership between Maastricht University (MU), the Care and Public Health Research Institute (CAPHRI), and the OMI. The OMI is an important international partner for us. Every year, we are able to deliver high-quality courses to OMI fellows and CAPHRI PhD students, combining the excellence of MU faculty with the great experience and exceptional organization provided by the OMI. Together we offer a platform for intercultural and interprofessional exchange and learning. In 2021, we held two OMInars, Health Communication and Health Promotion as well as Public Health Law. Although the courses were virtual, the interest, commitment, and education were superb. Participants highly appreciated both webinars. It is such a privilege for us to work with the OMI, which takes care of all organizational aspects so effectively that we, the faculty, can fully concentrate on developing and providing educational content. We are looking forward to working together in the years to come.

Since 2005, the Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Medical University of Graz has been in a very exciting and successful partnership with the OMI. Over the years, 60 pediatric seminars covering more than 15 pediatric subspecialties have been co-directed and taught by faculty from my institution, in partnership with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Columbia University. In addition, my department has hosted more than 420 OMI observers so far, and faculty from Graz have been involved in 20 satellite symposia in the fellows' home countries. Thereby, the OMI represents the largest international program my department has continuously been involved in for almost two decades. However, more important than the sheer numbers are the very gratifying teaching opportunities to share knowledge, skills, ideas, and to exchange experience with fellows from many countries, thus crossing borders in various ways.

**CEO  
University Hospital of Salzburg**

**Professor of Public Health  
Leadership and Workforce  
Development  
Maastricht University**

**Professor of Pediatrics  
Chair of the Department of Pediatrics  
and Adolescent Medicine  
Head of the Division of Pediatric  
Pulmonology and Allergology,  
and Cystic Fibrosis Center  
Medical University of Graz**

# OMI SEMINARS

The OMI seminars are one-week, intensive courses in all areas of medicine, which take place at Schloss Arenberg in Salzburg, Austria. Each medical specialty is divided into three modules, which rotate on an annual basis. Seminars are taught by physicians from leading American and European institutions and consist of state-of-the-art lectures, fellows' case presentations, workshops, and hands-on training. They are offered to highly qualified English-speaking physicians from countries in transition, who plan to pursue a professional career back home. The selection of fellows is competitive and based on merit. Fellowships cover travel expenses, tuition, a set of teaching materials, and full board.

Designed to temporarily replace in-person seminars, OMInars are three-day virtual events, which provide condensed content of regular OMI courses. Schedules include lectures, Q & A sessions, and grand rounds for fellows' case discussions.

In 2021, OMInars were held from January through May. By June, the OMI progressed to in-person seminars until mid-November. From mid-November through the end of the year, Austria endured another strict lockdown, during which the OMI switched to the OMInar course format. In total, the OMI organized 17 seminars and 21 OMInars, granting 1,180 fellowships to healthcare professionals from 63 different countries.

COVID-19 not only impacted our way of spreading knowledge, it also became an integral part of the OMI academic program. During the OMI seminars and OMInars, faculty implemented the latest findings and treatment options for COVID-19 in their respective fields and encouraged fruitful discussions among the attendees.

The content of the OMI seminars and OMInars is accessible through the OMI e-learning platform, which is a free resource for OMI alumni.

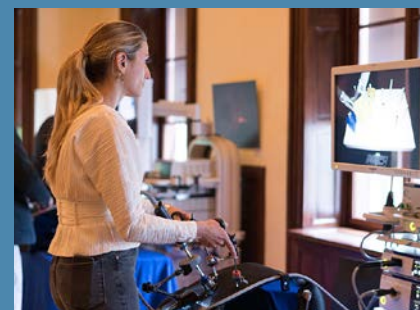
Seminars	
Maternal and Infant Health	
Palliative Care (ELNEC) I	
Dermatology	
Obstetrics and Gynecology	
ESU Master Class in Urology	
Global Health: Viruses, Liver and Cancers	
Psychiatry	
Otology and Temporal Bone Surgery	
Neurosurgery (Spine)	
Family Medicine	
Lipid Metabolism and Cardiovascular Risk	
Pediatric Emergency Medicine	
Cardiology	
Pediatric Urology	
Palliative Care (ELNEC) II	
Taste of Palliative Medicine	
Cardiac Surgery	
OMInars	
Pulmonology	
Pediatric Cardiology	
Ophthalmology	
Otolaryngology	
Rehabilitation Medicine	
Medical Quality and Safety	
Neurology	
General Pediatrics	
Anesthesiology and Intensive Care	
Bone and Joint Surgery	
Medical Education	
Oncology A: Hematologic Malignancies	
Internal Medicine	
Infectious Diseases	
Pathology	
Neurosurgery (Brain)	
Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics & Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	
Health Communication and Health Promotion: From Theory to Practice	
Public Health Law	
Diagnostic Imaging	
Trauma and Emergency Surgery	

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OMI SEMINARS







# MEDICAL EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The OMI’s educational approach not only includes classroom teaching, but also the practical, hands-on learning component. Wet labs and workshops allow fellows to apply the theoretical knowledge, which they gain throughout the seminar week to clinical practice. At the OMI, attendees can experience modern technology and learn from the best, working alongside skilled professionals who know the ropes and what it takes to ensure patients are treated as effectively as possible. The OMI faculty is passionate about sharing their experience and imparting clinical skills to talented, young colleagues. We are grateful to the following companies and their representatives for helping us prepare and facilitate various trainings during 2021: Laerdal, Medtronic, MED-EL, Olympus, Siemens, and Zeiss.

## SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR IN OTOTOLOGY AND TEMPORAL BONE SURGERY

“I liked the training because we had a chance to work with cutting-edge equipment and were supervised by world-renowned experts. In the lab, I was able to improve my knowledge of the temporal bone anatomy as well as perform basic and advanced otologic procedures, starting with cortical mastoidectomy on the first day and performing labyrinthectomy, identifying vestibular aqueduct, and skeletonizing the facial nerve on the second day. Practical skills and knowledge of anatomy are paramount for a good ear surgeon, and thanks to the OMI, I was able to improve my skills to provide better surgical care for my patients and share the gained knowledge with my colleagues in Ukraine.”



**OSTAP ORISHCHAK, MD**  
OMI FELLOW FROM UKRAINE

## SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR IN OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

“The vacuum-assisted delivery simulation training was an excellent part of the seminar. It was my first experience with Kiwi vacuum and I really liked it. It was simple and easy to use without much risk for the mother and baby. We all had a chance to try out how it works. Unfortunately, I do not have the opportunity to use it in my hospital, but I hope I will someday.”



**BRANKO ANDRIC, MD**  
OMI FELLOW FROM SERBIA

## SALZBURG ESU/ WEILL CORNELL MASTER CLASS IN UROLOGY

“I liked the workshop very much. I attended the intermediate training in which we were practicing the surgical steps of laparoscopic pyeloplasty. The training set and kidney-ureter model were excellent, as were the tutors who guided us through the pyeloureteral anastomosis patiently, while sharing their tips and tricks. The best thing about this session was the personal approach and mentoring with suggestions on how to continue training afterwards.”



**RAUNO OKAS, MD**  
OMI FELLOW FROM ESTONIA

## SALZBURG CHOP SEMINAR IN PEDIATRIC EMERGENCY MEDICINE

“The hands-on component of the seminar was amazing. Emergency and resuscitation situations are infrequent, so there are only a few chances to practice in real life. This workshop allowed us to structure our thought processes and feel some of that stress without having to deal with the consequences of what may go wrong. It was also an incentive to continue doing these sessions back in my home country.”



**ISABEL BRITO, MD**  
OMI FELLOW FROM PORTUGAL

“I appreciated the use of teamwork in the emergency scenarios. The simulation training will definitely impact my professional career as I have acquired new skills in cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Armed with this knowledge, I now approach emergencies with greater confidence.”



**OMOMAYOWA FAWALE, MD**  
OMI FELLOW FROM NIGERIA





# BUILDING LEADERSHIP IN HEALTHCARE



RON KEREN, MD, MPH  
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
OF PHILADELPHIA

For more than a decade, the Open Medical Institute has offered an interdisciplinary leadership program, designed to enable OMI alumni to assume leadership positions in the healthcare systems of their countries. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the Institut Pasteur, the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region, as well as Maastricht University, provide the academic leadership for this program and, together with the OMI, continuously expand the range of courses. The popularity and significance of the training program is reflected by the very high number of international applicants from all medical specialties.

## MEDICAL QUALITY AND PATIENT SAFETY

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is committed to continuously improving the quality, safety, and value of patient care it provides. Support for this work comes from the Center for Healthcare Quality and Analytics, which is led by Dr. Ron Keren, Professor of Pediatrics, Chief Medical Officer, and Senior Vice President at CHOP, and includes more than 200 professionals ranging from medical directors, data analysts, data engineers, and improvement advisors to human factors engineers, patient safety experts, and informatics specialists. This year, the OMI was thrilled to conduct an OMIinar on Medical Quality and Patient Safety, which was directed by Dr. Keren. 31 participants from 22 different countries were introduced to the history of quality improvement and patient safety in healthcare and learned about commonly used quality improvement models and tools to support process improvement. There was a strong emphasis on how to apply systematic approaches to quality improvement challenges and plan such projects. Fellows also strengthened their skills in evaluating patient safety problems and strategically leading a culture of change.

## HEALTH COMMUNICATION AND HEALTH PROMOTION

Why are people engaging in healthy behavior or not? For instance, why do some people want to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and others are hesitant or refuse to do so? Why are some people physically active and others are not? Why do some patients take their medication as prescribed and others do not? Why are some companies engaging in health promotion activities for their workers and others do not? What are important drivers and determinants for such decisions? How can we use this information to optimize our health communication strategies? This year's Maastricht University OMIinar in Health Communication and Health Promotion focused on the critical examination of theoretical concepts and how to put them into practice. 29 fellows from 21 countries connected across borders and time zones to join this virtual course, which was offered for the very first time. Lectures included health promotion planning, awareness, motivation and attitude, health counseling, stakeholder involvement, program development, and eHealth.

## SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR IN NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)

"As a first-year neurosurgery resident, it was a unique experience. We went through the entire spine surgery theoretically, then had a hands-on training using modern technology. It was the first time that I encountered minimally invasive spine (MIS) surgery, navigation-guided MIS screw placement, and had the chance to learn and execute some very elementary surgical techniques in a minimally invasive way. While most of these techniques are not yet performed in my country, this training laid the foundation for my professional career as a neurosurgeon."



VALON ABDULLAHU, MD  
OMI FELLOW FROM KOSOVO

"The hands-on training was the best part of the seminar since I believe one benefits most from practicing surgery. It was my first chance to work with an O-arm and I liked it a lot. Also, I was fortunate to do cadaver dissection regarding both lumbar and anterior cervical decompression, with valuable input from the faculty. Overall, this was by far one of the best educational courses I have been to, and the hands-on session was the highlight."



HRVOJE BARIC, MD  
OMI FELLOW FROM CROATIA

## SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR IN CARDIOLOGY

"I learned about pacemaker programming and difficult, minimally invasive catheter techniques, allowing me to practice a transcatheter aortic valve implantation and place a left ventricular lead. It was an eye-opening experience which showed me that with better teaching, training, and modern technology, I can better help my patients. The workshops equipped me with skills that I could not obtain in my home country."



SUVD NERGUI, MD  
OMI FELLOW FROM MONGOLIA

## SALZBURG CLEVELAND CLINIC SEMINAR IN CARDIAC SURGERY

"I would like to thank you for the valuable wet lab training. The knowledge and teaching approach of the faculty was amazing. As a surgeon, it was helpful to understand how the transesophageal echocardiography works and how to do an aortic valve replacement properly. I now feel more confident in applying this knowledge to different situations in my practice."



FADI SABATEEN, MD  
OMI FELLOW FROM SLOVAKIA



“Solutions to the world’s most complex and urgent global health problems require bold and skillful action. They demand the dedicated efforts of a diverse workforce prepared with the technical expertise and the will to apply it to make the world a happier and healthier place. The OMI is making a major contribution to this goal by bringing together a vibrant group of professionals who share a passion and commitment to improving the public’s health.”

SUZANNE BABICH, DRPH | INDIANA UNIVERSITY

## PUBLIC HEALTH LAW

Law is integral to public health. Legal interventions are commonly used in areas like tobacco control and road safety. Law defines the powers and duties of government health agencies. Perhaps most importantly, laws of all kinds influence and mediate the social determinants of health. Most if not all public health professionals deal with law in their work, whether they are developing, advocating for, implementing, or evaluating policies for health. This year’s Maastricht University OMInar in Public Health Law introduced participants from both health and legal backgrounds to the transdisciplinary model of public health law, which emphasizes collaboration across public health disciplines to promote healthy public policies. Participants used the five essential public health law services framework and a problem-based method to improve their competency to devise, advocate for, implement, and evaluate laws for health. Discussion topics included the COVID-19 resurgence, the regulation of marijuana use, and the use of electronic scooters. The different backgrounds of the 30 attendees, both OMI fellows and Maastricht University students, brought a variety of perspectives and experiences resulting in fruitful discussions.

“Medicine has become a team sport, but in most cases a physician remains the captain of the team. Having the correct skills and tools to be a leader is critically important to a physician’s success. Whether you are building a clinical program, managing an educational effort, or leading a department, clinic, or medical center, the OMI leadership program allows fellows to work with leaders and develop their capabilities to lead.”

JAMES M. CALLAHAN, MD | CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA



JEAN-PIERRE VARTANIAN, PHD  
INSTITUT PASTEUR

## GLOBAL HEALTH: VIRUSES, LIVER AND CANCERS

Based in Paris, France, the Institut Pasteur is an international research and education center that stands out in many disciplines. It has gained worldwide recognition for its excellent research and leads the way in tackling global health threats. In 2017, the Institut Pasteur and the OMI decided to join forces and included a global health series into the OMI leadership program. This year, it was an honor to have Dr. Jean-Pierre Vartanian, Research Director and Deputy Director of the Department of Virology at the Institut Pasteur, in Salzburg for an entire week to lead a seminar on Viruses, Liver and Cancers. He worked alongside 12 colleagues to facilitate an excellent course, bringing together 30 fellows from 21 countries, including Institut Pasteur satellites in Cambodia, Cameroon, Central Africa, China, Côte d’Ivoire, France, Greece, Lao PDR, and Senegal, both in-person and remotely.

# IT’S ALL ABOUT LIFE OMI ADVANCES PALLIATIVE MEDICINE GLOBALLY

**In collaboration with the Open Society Foundations (OSF), the Open Medical Institute emphasized the importance of palliative medicine by hosting three seminars this year: two end-of-life courses designed for nurses, doctors, and psychologists, and one exclusively for physicians.**

The End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) is an educational project to train nurses and other clinicians in palliative care. It is a collaboration of the City of Hope Medical Center in California and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. The ELNEC project began 21 years ago and has trained clinicians in all 50 American states and 100 countries to date. ELNEC is a train-the-trainer project, in which clinicians attend an ELNEC course to gain knowledge in palliative care and teaching skills so they can return to their own countries and clinical settings to train others. ELNEC has prepared over 45,000 trainers who have themselves trained over 1.4 million

clinicians, improving the care of patients and families facing serious illness and/or the end of life. This year, 49 fellows from seven countries attended two ELNEC seminars in Salzburg.

38 physicians from 17 countries participated in the “Taste of Palliative Medicine” seminar at Schloss Arenberg, led by faculty from North America and Western Europe. The weeklong course applied the latest science and research. The new Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Curriculum (PCIC) requires physicians to watch online videos that include real patients and the doctors treating them, as well as to read core material. Whether in the lecture hall or in small group sessions, the emphasis was on individual participation. Finally, to facilitate the dissemination of this new development in medicine to their home countries, participants were given access to all the online PCIC videos and content as well as the faculty presentations so they can adapt and translate for their own use.







“Since 2007, the OMI has supported the ELNEC project to train clinicians in Eastern European countries with several trainer courses held in Salzburg. At these courses, participants are trained in vital aspects of care, including pain and symptom management, communication, cultural considerations, ethical concerns, and care at the time of death. ELNEC courses cover patients of all ages, from pediatrics through geriatric care. The courses held in Salzburg have been among the most successful ELNEC trainings since our inception and have trained nurses as the largest group of professionals providing care across all settings. The participants from these courses have become world leaders in palliative care and have trained many others who have greatly impacted clinical practice, education, and health policy.”

**BETTY FERRELL PHD, FAAN, FPCN, CHPN**  
CITY OF HOPE MEDICAL CENTER



“Imagine a world where patients living with serious advancing illness have the care they hope for and their suffering is addressed quickly so they can continue to live fully. Because of the success of modern medicine, there is a pressing need to assure physicians know how to help their patients function, eat, and sleep well, as well as minimize their symptoms and stress. The medical research is clear: when patients get this care early and consistently, they live better and longer. The pressing need is to get this into medical practice. Palliative medicine is the formal name for this new specialty. It is practiced in partnership with a patient’s primary medical team or at the specialist level. While palliative medicine is now a formally recognized medical specialty or subspecialty in North America and Western Europe, that is not the case in many Eastern European and Central Asian countries. The OMI is working to address this gap. Receiving more than 150 applications for this year’s OMI course demonstrates two things. First, the OMI has been a leader in disseminating palliative medicine knowledge and skills globally for nearly 20 years. Secondly, there is still unmet need.”

**FRANK D. FERRIS, MD, FAAHPM, FAACE**  
OHIOHEALTH



“Skillful and compassionate palliative care reduces suffering and improves quality of life for all who are experiencing serious illness. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 40 million people around the world with a variety of illnesses would benefit from palliative care. The current COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the extraordinary need for this care along with well-trained palliative care professionals. In 2021, our international faculty provided education, skill building, networking, and mentoring nurses, doctors, and psychologists throughout two ELNEC seminars in Salzburg. These professionals will now return to their countries with the expertise to lead new efforts and transform the current state of palliative care within Eastern Europe. On behalf of these professionals, and the thousands of people in their care who will benefit, we are grateful to the OMI for supporting this essential educational effort.”

**JUDITH PAICE, PHD, RN**  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

# OMI NEXT GENERATION



**STEPHEN LUDWIG, MD**  
CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL  
OF PHILADELPHIA

**J. LLOYD MICHENER, MD**  
DUKE UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER

**JOSEPH TENENBAUM, MD, FACC, FACP**  
COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY

## The Open Medical Institute is excited to welcome a new generation of program leaders.

In September 2020, Dr. James M. Callahan was appointed as the new Medical Director of Global Medical Education at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, succeeding Dr. Stephen Ludwig, a brilliant teacher and mentor, who actively supported the OMI since 1995. Having been an OMI faculty member since 2008, Dr. Callahan is thrilled to continue to build upon the successes that the CHOP team has achieved with the OMI.

“Looking through some cards and communications during the end of the year holidays, I delighted in reading messages from Austria, Latvia, Georgia, Serbia, Slovakia, Hungary, Switzerland, Mexico, and Chile. These were greetings from colleagues and friends who I met during my many years of working with the OMI. I have made 11 trips to Salzburg since the mid-1990s. Each of these trips were a teaching and learning experience and the springboard for many valued relationships. The OMI has been a fulfilling part of my career, but as the saying goes, “all good things must come to an end”. At age 76, the time has come to lessen my responsibilities. I am fortunate to turn over my day-to-day Global Medical Education responsibilities to Dr. Callahan, a physician leader who I respect immensely and know will care for the program with the same passion, dedication, and respect for the OMI mission as I have. Working with him for more than 25 years, I have found him to be an outstanding teacher, scholar, and administrator. I wish all of you continued success in improving healthcare, especially for children, throughout the world. My sincere gratitude to the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and the Leir Foundation for supporting this work.”

**STEPHEN LUDWIG, MD**

Dr. John W. Ragsdale III will assume the position of Dr. J. Lloyd Michener, who has travelled to Salzburg 16 times since 1995, to share his expertise in family medicine and community health with colleagues from around the world. The new course director designed an age-related three-year curriculum including pediatric training, adult medicine, and geriatrics.

“With enormous appreciation and thanks for the wonderful times we have had with you, I believe it is time for me to tender my resignation as course director of the OMI seminars in Family Medicine. They have been an important part of my professional and personal life for more than two decades, and I am indebted to you for making them not just possible, but so deeply meaningful.”

**J. LLOYD MICHENER, MD**

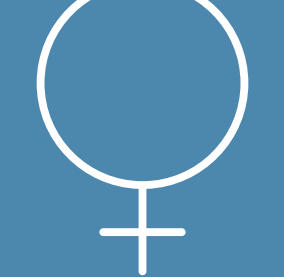
After serving as the course director of the annual Salzburg Columbia University Seminar in Internal Medicine for 16 years, Dr. Joseph Tenenbaum handed the position over to Dr. Kristin M. Burkart who will lead the course from now on. She will be assisted by the newly appointed Austrian co-course director, Dr. Günter Weiss from the Medical University of Innsbruck.

“I recall the feeling that I had on the departure for my first seminar in August 2003 when my flight was cancelled as I was checking in at the airport and the entire East Coast of the United States was shut down by a blackout. In spite of the adversity, we were able to leave the following day, and thus began a 16-year experience with the Salzburg seminar that proved entirely rewarding, illuminating, and with relatively little adversity (apart from for the horrendous roof fire and dislocation). The brilliance of Dr. Aulitzky in conceiving the seminar rewarded all my colleagues and the fellows with an incomparable teaching opportunity with bright and engaging learners, an environment that supported us throughout, and satellites in a variety of settings (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Bucharest, Bratislava). The generosity of the staff, of the board of the Stiftung, and the friends in both Salzburg and New York has been exemplary. I know that my successor, Dr. Burkart, is similarly engaged by the excellence of this educational opportunity. Leadership of the Salzburg seminars is one of the highest points of my half century in medicine.”

**JOSEPH TENENBAUM, MD, FACC, FACP**

OMI  
FACTS AND  
FIGURES

1993–2021



56%

FEMALE FELLOWS

2,363

FACULTY MEMBERS

770

SEMINARS & OMINARS



3,453

OBSERVERSHIPS

15,050

RECORDED LECTURES



FELLOWS FROM

129

COUNTRIES



276

SATELLITE SYMPOSIA

25,038

FELLOWSHIPS

2021



1,180

FELLOWSHIPS

36

OBSERVERSHIPS



FELLOWS FROM



63

COUNTRIES

38

SEMINARS & OMINARS

2

SATELLITE SYMPOSIA



# OMI OBSERVERSHIPS

Launched in 1998, the OMI observership program offers OMI fellows the opportunity to spend time in Austrian and American hospitals to improve their clinical and research skills, learn new techniques and treatment protocols, and experience modern hospital management. These placements often result in ongoing exchanges between the involved institutions and fosters the integration of OMI alumni into the international medical community. Thus far, the OMI has granted 3,453 observerships to OMI seminar alumni from 53 different countries.

In 2021, the OMI observership program was on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, the OMI introduced a new observership application platform, making it simple to apply online. This new platform will significantly reduce waiting time for observership acceptance and placement. Once observerships were possible again, the General Hospital of Vienna invited 23 observers, the General Hospital of Graz hosted 10 doctors, and the General Hospital of Salzburg welcomed three observers.

Dr. Eva Elksne from Latvia was selected for a two-month observership in the Department of Ophthalmology at the General Hospital of Salzburg. Throughout this time, she stayed at Schloss Arenberg, the OMI venue in Salzburg. In an interview with the OMI, Dr. Elksne talked about her experience, which we are pleased to share.

## How did your OMI journey begin?

I heard about the OMI seminars for the first time from an article in our local medical journal. As a young resident, I was very interested to expand my knowledge and gain international experience. In 2019, I was selected for the ophthalmology seminar. When I arrived in Salzburg, I was surprised how well everything was organized, starting from the welcome reception to the detailed, five-day schedule for lectures. I still remember my emotions before the pre-test, when I did not feel confident about different ophthalmological topics. I have to say that during the week my mind was truly enriched with new information, and the final post-test went smoothly. Every lecturer inspired me with their topics and provided a better understanding for me to

build up my knowledge. I would like to highlight the excellent level of all lectures presented by American and Austrian professionals. The week was very intense when learning in the classroom, but in my free time I really enjoyed social networking with other participants and the faculty. Sharing your life experience and discussing cultural topics were another great benefit of the seminar. At the end of the week, I was deeply motivated to continue my career development in ophthalmology. Directly after the seminar, I applied for an observership in Austria, hoping that one day I will have this unique opportunity to gain more practical knowledge.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last two years were very challenging. The OMI started online webinars, called OMInars, which in my opinion are a great solution to continue learning and interacting with leading experts. I was very happy to be selected for the three-day ophthalmology OMInar in 2021. As always, the lectures were state-of-the-art and provided new information. I was particularly impacted by the faculty member Dr. Herbert A. Reitsamer, a world-renowned expert in minimally invasive treatment for glaucoma. In that moment, I thought about how great it would be to visit the clinic and see how the procedures are performed.



## After successfully completing an OMI seminar as well as an OMInar, you qualified for the OMI observership, which is the second step in the OMI's educational program. Please tell us about your experience.

At the end of October 2021, I finally had the chance to start a two-month observership in the Department of Ophthalmology at the General Hospital of Salzburg. Dr. Reitsamer was my mentor, and I had many possibilities to see all kinds of glaucoma surgeries, including minimally invasive procedures. In my opinion, one of the biggest advantages for me was the opportunity to ask skilled professionals all my questions related to glaucoma. I was excited to observe and receive feedback on how to improve my performance when evaluating patients. Selective laser trabeculoplasty will probably be the first technique I will apply when I get home. There are several limitations for minimally invasive glaucoma surgery in my country, but I am glad that we will soon have more opportunities to implement modern approaches. My observership even resulted in a joint publication "Radius-Maumenee Syndrome: A Case Series with a Long-Term Follow-Up".

## How has the observership benefited you personally and professionally?

After two months, I have become a better ophthalmologist and I really hope I will maintain this unremitting inspiration to keep on learning and teaching others. The best I can give to my patients is to improve and update my knowledge. I would like to thank the OMI for its strong motivation to share knowledge and for the unique opportunities such as the seminars, OMInars, and observerships, which are helping doctors worldwide to become better educated, improve professionalism, and be inspired by role-models in their field!

EVA ELKSNE, MD | OMI FELLOW FROM LATVIA

# 36

OBSERVERSHIPS

Albania, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine



# OMI SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM IN KOSOVO

The OMI satellite symposia are one-to-three-day medical conferences, which take place in the fellows' home countries. This program allows OMI alumni to host OMI faculty, thus bringing international expertise to their home institutions and reaching a large audience of local healthcare professionals. So far, 276 events have been held in 31 different countries.

The first OMI satellite symposium since the outbreak of COVID-19 focused on radiology and took place at the AAB College in Pristina, Kosovo in December 2021. The two-day event was organized by the OMI local coordinator and radiologist, Dr. Bujar Gjikolli, and led by Dr. David W. Trost, Associate Professor of Clinical Radiology and Director of Interventional Radiology at Weill Cornell Medicine, one of the most committed OMI faculty members who has been involved in 24 seminars and several satellite symposia over the years. This was the fourth OMI conference held in Kosovo. During the opening ceremony, Dr. Bujar Demjaha, Rector from AAB College, Christoph Weidinger, the Austrian Ambassador to Kosovo, and Pavel Bilik, the Czech Republic Ambassador to Kosovo, highlighted the impact of the OMI programs for the Kosovan healthcare system. Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky emphasized the importance of fighting against the threat of brain drain, which is the main goal of the OMI. The symposium consisted of lectures from several radiology experts, including Dr. David W. Trost and Dr. Petra Steyerova, a former OMI fellow from the Czech Republic. Nearly 200 doctors applied to participate in the conference. Two doctors were selected to lecture virtually, one from Bosnia and Herzegovina and one from Turkey. Topics discussed ranged from percutaneous therapies for liver and renal tumors, emergency interventional radiology, oncological imaging for practice, breast interventions, hybrid imaging in oncology, to peripheral nerve ultrasound and nerve blocks. More than 100 attendees joined the event, of which the opening ceremony was broadcasted live on state and private television channels in Kosovo. During his stay, Dr. Aulitzky met with the Deputy Minister of Health and the Secretary of the Ministry of Health to discuss future cooperation, aiming to increase the number of Kosovan participants in the OMI programs. He also visited the University Clinical Center of Kosovo, where a library is named after him.

# TRANSATLANTIC EXCHANGE IN PEDIATRIC UROLOGY

The Open Medical Institute is highly committed to initiating clinical cooperation between its academic partners. Dr. Thomas F. Kolon, Associate Chief of the Division of Urology at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Professor of Urology at the Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, was hosted by Dr. Josef Oswald, Chief of the Pediatric Urology Department at the Sisters of Mercy Hospital in Linz. Together they coordinated this visiting professorship prior to the seminar in Salzburg.

Dr. Kolon stated: "This was a wonderful opportunity to exchange thoughts on medical treatment of pediatric urology patients. We spent time on patient rounds, radiologic and pre-operative review conferences, as well as in the operating room sharing surgical technique. I delivered a lecture on "Nephron-sparing Surgery in Wilms Tumor", and we had a thoughtful discussion on current treatment strategy. We all thoroughly enjoyed furthering our medical knowledge in the hope of optimizing our care of the pediatric urology patient."

Dr. Oswald shared that "(...) this was of great benefit for the whole team as well as for the child on whom we performed a difficult reconstruction of a urogenital malformation. The entire team was impressed by the surgical technique used by Dr. Kolon. For us, especially for our younger fellows, the exchange with Dr. Kolon was an inspiring experience, both professionally and personally."

This year's Salzburg CHOP Seminar in Pediatric Urology was the third year that Dr. Kolon and Dr. Oswald have collaborated as course and co-course director. There is no better way to build relationships than by spending time in each other's hospitals, sharing knowledge and surgical skills with residents and attending physicians. The OMI is proud to see such transatlantic collaborations and friendships develop through the seminars.



**PABLO LEGORRETA**  
FOUNDER AND  
HONORARY LIFE  
CHAIRMAN |  
ALIANZA MÉDICA  
PARA LA SALUD

## OMI MEX | AMSA

OMI MEX is a joint initiative between the Open Medical Institute and Alianza Médica para la Salud (AMSA), a non-profit and non-governmental organization dedicated to improving healthcare in Mexico and Latin America. Since 2010, OMI faculty who teach pro bono in Salzburg also travel to Mexico to train physicians in various specialties. COVID-19 is here to stay, and we have continued to adapt to living with this new normal throughout 2021 as well.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we had to move from face-to-face to virtual activities. Thanks to the vision and enthusiasm of Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky, the generosity of Pablo and Almudena Legorreta, the unconditional support of AMSA's Board of Trustees presided by Gerardo Legorreta, the leadership of doctors we have trained in the last 11 years, technological advances, as well as AMSA's great team, we managed to successfully navigate this new normal without neglecting the quality of our training programs.





# OMI EXPANDS INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



**The Open Medical Institute has an extensive partnership network, collaborating with 43 institutions and 28 coordinators across the globe. These partners actively promote the OMI programs to local healthcare professionals, and provide administrative, financial, and logistical support. In 2021, the OMI signed memoranda of understanding with medical institutions in Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Bulgaria, and Croatia. Furthermore, the OMI welcomed two new local coordinators to the OMI team.**

After having developed a strong relationship with leading medical institutions in Tanzania, the OMI decided to take a further step within Africa and signed a partnership agreement with the Addis Ababa University College of Health Sciences and the Tikur Anbessa (Black Lion) Specialized Hospital located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia this year. As the largest hospital in Ethiopia, Black Lion is the main teaching center for both clinical and preclinical training of most disciplines. To ensure smooth operation, Dr. Tewodros Haile Gebremariam, Chief of the Pulmonary and Critical Care Division and OMI alumnus, assumed the role of an OMI local coordinator. Thus far, 86 fellowships and one observership have been awarded to Ethiopian physicians.

In 2021, the Osh State University, Faculty of Medicine and the OMI signed an agreement to further integrate Kyrgyz physicians into the OMI global network. Through this memorandum, Osh State University, Faculty of Medicine became an official partner in the OMI's educational program. So far, the OMI has trained more than 430 fellows from Kyrgyzstan and provided 55 observerships.

The OMI also renewed its official partnerships with the Medical University of Plovdiv in Bulgaria and the University of Zagreb, School of Medicine in Croatia. The renewed agreements allow both institutions to nominate 10 qualified physicians per year to participate in the OMI seminars, and an OMI satellite symposium or visiting professorship will be held annually at each university. To date, more than 640 Bulgarian fellows have participated in the OMI seminars and 140 observerships have taken place. Dr. Gloria Leksic, an OMI alumna working in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University Hospital Center in Zagreb, joined the OMI local coordinator network and serves as the new OMI ambassador within Croatia. So far, the OMI has awarded more than 820 fellowships and 79 observerships to Croatian healthcare professionals.



"I am very excited to be the Croatian local coordinator for the OMI. When I think of the OMI seminars, including my own experience, I remember a wonderful week full of interesting and interactive learning. I reflect on both professional and social exchange. On the first day, I remember Dr. Aulitzky saying that our group of participants would feel like family by the end of the week. To be honest, in that moment I did not really understand what he was talking about, but it quickly became true. Hence, when my colleagues ask me about the OMI, I tell them that it is not only about education, but it is an experience that will last a lifetime. My goal is to actively find young people who are motivated to improve their medical knowledge and skills, who are optimistic, and ready for a challenge. I am eager to spread the word about the OMI!"

GLORIA LEKSIC, MD | OMI LOCAL COORDINATOR FROM CROATIA

In 2021, AMSA offered five OMI MEX webinars for 145 fellows, focusing on the specialties that most affect the Mexican population, such as breast cancer, pediatric urology and nephrology, diabetes, and maternal and infant health. We also offered a webinar on medical leadership.

Faculty from the OMI and AMSA's academic partners, such as the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Columbia University, ABC Medical Center in Mexico, the National Institutes of Health in Mexico, Tec de Monterrey Medicine School and Health Science, and the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) presented outstanding topics to enrich young Mexican doctors in their professional careers. It is a privilege to have these world-renowned partners by our side to achieve our mission.

We are aware that in-person seminars are a unique experience that can never be replaced by virtual gatherings. Therefore, we have been diligently working to resume face-to-face activities, and in 2022, OMI MEX will start offering continuing medical education for Central and South American residents in Mexico City, using the same model the OMI has implemented in Austria since 1993 for Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa.

As of December 2021, AMSA has trained more than 2,265 fellows, 1,485 of them participating in OMI MEX activities. We will continue to work towards the mission of being the most innovative foundation in Latin America, promoting human capital within the healthcare system.





# 25 YEARS OF OMI IN KYRGYZSTAN



For the past 25 years, beginning in 1996, the Open Medical Institute has trained dedicated physicians from Kyrgyzstan in Salzburg. Today, more than 430 Kyrgyz fellows have participated in the OMI seminars and 55 of them have returned to Austria for month-long observerships. Out of 435 OMI fellows from Kyrgyzstan, 68 work in leadership positions in the country’s healthcare system, ranging from hospital directors, chiefs of departments, ministry of health officers, members of parliament, and leaders within international organizations such as the UN, WHO, and UNICEF. This represents 16% of all Kyrgyz doctors trained by the OMI.

To celebrate this milestone, three renowned institutions, the Kyrgyz State Medical Academy, the Osh State University, and the National Center for Mother and Child Health Care, hosted a variety of clinical master classes over the course of four days, all presented by OMI alumni. Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky attended the celebrations via livestream.

At the conclusion, the OMI and the Osh State University, Faculty of Medicine signed a memorandum of understanding, committing to further integrate Kyrgyz physicians into the OMI global network. Additionally, Dr. Aulitzky was awarded the certificate of honor from the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The OMI is grateful to its local coordinator, Dr. Lola Asanalieva, for organizing this series of events and for her incredible work supporting the OMI community and providing excellent guidance to applicants throughout the years. Due to her great effort, she was presented with a certificate of honor for the development of healthcare in Kyrgyzstan. Congratulations!

### OMI Kyrgyzstan Facing COVID-19

Kyrgyzstan has suffered tremendously throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the OMI’s key concepts of knowledge transfer and capacity building, our Kyrgyz partners created a series of training programs, partially funded by the OMI.

Throughout 2021, the Open Medical Community Kyrgyzstan initiated and implemented a project called “Doctors to Doctors”,

which trained 622 doctors and 62 nurses in COVID-19 treatment protocols, provided hospitals and medical workers in remote regions with medical devices, supplies, and personal protective equipment, and evaluated the pandemic’s impact on the country’s healthcare system.

The project offered practical trainings on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of COVID-19 to 56 Kyrgyz doctors. Those with the highest test scores were invited to be part of the Train-the-Trainers program.

The OMC Summer School was a one-week program designed to train 22 young doctors from all regions of Kyrgyzstan on the most pressing issues of COVID-19. All lecturers were OMI alumni, and in addition to training, they also informed young doctors about the possibilities and prospects of the OMI programs in Austria.

## OMI NOMINATED FOR EHLA 2021

The Open Medical Institute is honored to have been nominated by Gediminas Cerniauskas (European Institute of Health and Sustainable Development, Vilnius, Lithuania) for the European Health Leadership Award (EHLA) 2021, which showcases and supports the achievements of individuals and organizations displaying exceptional leadership in safeguarding or improving the health of people in Europe.

Out of 16 nominations, the OMI is pleased to have been short-listed as one of the top three candidates for the award.

The European Health Leadership Award is organized by the European Health Forum Gastein and supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection.

# MONGOLIAN HEALTHCARE LEADERS

Fellows from Mongolia have been participating in the OMI programs since 2000, gaining and sharing knowledge in their respective medical specialties. To date, the OMI has awarded more than 610 fellowships and 110 observerships, and has organized three satellite symposia in Mongolia. A recent survey conducted by Dr. Enkhtuya Byambasuren, the OMI local coordinator in Mongolia, demonstrates that out of 502 Mongolian fellows, 97 or almost 20% currently work in leadership positions within the Mongolian healthcare system.

The success of our Mongolian fellows is impressive and Dr. Byambasuren has certainly contributed to this exceptional success story. After completing an OMI seminar, fellows share the course content with co-workers in their departments and hospitals. Most have found the seminars to be very useful, stating that they have learned a lot of cutting-edge scientific information and training methodologies. Using these lectures, the OMI Mongolian community initiated the fellows’ video lessons project. The goal of this project is to deliver at least one lecture from each seminar to other doctors in Mongolia. Fellows translate one topic that they believe will be useful and record a video lesson to be presented through [www.cme.mn](http://www.cme.mn), a website offering health-related educational resources to health professionals in Mongolia. Currently, more than 25 video lessons have been recorded and presented in Mongolian on this website.

4 PARLIAMENT, MINISTRY OF HEALTH	31 CHIEFS OF DEPARTMENTS	10 DIRECTORS AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS OF HOSPITALS
4 CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT	15 DIRECTORS OF PRIVATE CLINICS AND LABORATORIES	7 HEALTHCARE MANAGERS
12 MONGOLIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	11 UN ORGANIZATIONS (WHO, UNICEF), INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

# OMI DESIGN

For more than two decades, the Open Medical Institute has been committed to improving healthcare globally. Renowned for bringing together healthcare professionals from around the world, the initiative provides a unique platform for knowledge transfer, experience exchange, and capacity building.

Throughout 2021, the OMI continued to develop its visual identity. Based on a makeover of the existing logo, the new design gives the OMI a clear and homogenous visual appearance and every element (logo, slogan, typeface, color palette) ensures that we speak a uniform visual language. The new design is seen across all media. It has reinforced user-friendly interfaces online, including the OMI application platform, website and social media, and is consistently used in digital campaigns and throughout printed materials such as brochures, letterheads, and presentations. In September, the OMI released a brand-new image brochure. Content includes information about the various programs, academic and international partnerships, e-learning, and the global impact. It also features the seminar venue in Salzburg as well as the initiative’s milestones. With the new OMI design, we are showcasing ourselves as one of a kind within the international medical community – in a sleek, modern, and recognizable way.

## OMI DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

Did you know that your OMI journey does not end after the conclusion of one seminar? Once an OMI fellow, you become part of the OMI global network of more than 25,000 alumni based in 129 countries around the world. Let’s stay connected!

In March 2021, the Open Medical Institute launched a digital information campaign intended to regularly update and maintain a strong connection with our network. This includes quarterly newsletters that are sent to the entire OMI community comprised of faculty, fellows, board members, sponsors, donors, and friends. Furthermore, OMI alumni are informed about educational opportunities related to their specialties and upcoming program deadlines. Additionally, after the conclusion of each OMI seminar, alumni are provided with the digital course content allowing them to refresh their knowledge. Regular campaign tracking allows us to measure the results of our digital efforts. We are pleased to see that the new campaign is well received by the OMI network.



# MUSIC FOR MEDICINE BENEFIT

In November 2021, we were fortunate to have a window of opportunity after the Delta and before the Omicron wave to hold an in-person Music for Medicine benefit at a private club in New York City.

Rainer Honeck, Concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, accompanied by Christopher Hinterhuber, lightened the mood with music by Franz Schubert, Fritz Kreisler, and Amy Beach. Rainer Honeck also provided a short tutorial on his violin and its maker – Antonio Stradivari. Dr. Christoph Huber, co-founder of BioNTech, in conversation with AAF board member and Royalty Pharma CEO, Pablo Legorreta, explained how he and his team experimented with messenger RNA, which was used to create a vaccine to protect against COVID-19.



Following the concert and talk, the guests moved to dinner, where Peter Costanzo from Doyle's Auction house ran a successful paddle raise.

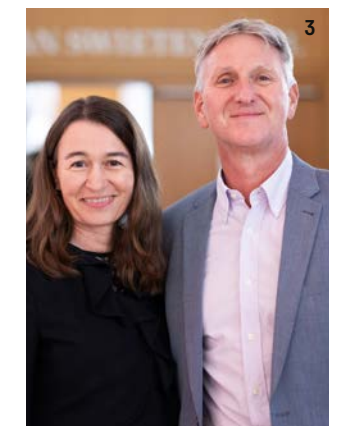
By evening's end, \$552,000 had been raised. Pablo Legorreta made an additional \$250,000 donation to support the Pediatric Urology seminars, and Cynthia and Dr. Thomas P. Sculco contributed \$50,000 for the new building at Schloss Arenberg, bringing the grand total raised to \$852,000.

We are enormously grateful to our OMI faculty, AAF board members, and our friends who made this such a convivial and financially successful evening.



- 1 Daisy Soros and Edward Gallagher
- 2 Rory Riggs and Margaret Crotty
- 3 Pablo Legorreta and Christoph Huber, MD
- 4 Eric Elowitz, MD and Barbara Baskin, MD
- 5 Rainer Honeck and Christopher Hinterhuber
- 6 Barbara Tober and Betsy McCaughey
- 7 Amb. Martin Weiss

# VIENNA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE GALA



This year's Vienna School of Medicine Gala, which took place in October at the historic Van Swieten Saal at the Medical University of Vienna, focused on the nervous system. 155 guests joined the gala dinner and enjoyed short lectures about past and present innovations in neurology, neurosurgery, and neuroscience.

The program included presentations by Dr. Thomas Berger, Dr. Karl Rössler, and Dr. Jürgen Knoblich, representing the Medical University of Vienna. The speakers took the audience on a journey through the human nervous system, giving an insight into the history, newest developments, as well as the latest neurosurgical advancements and techniques in neurology and psychiatry in Vienna. Dr. Knoblich explained how cerebral organoids help understand neurological diseases providing a glimpse into the future of neuroscience.

Dr. Markus Müller, Dean of the Medical University of Vienna, and Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky presented Dr. Shahrokh F. Shariat, Chairman of the Department of Urology at the Medical University of Vienna, with this year's OMI award for his support of the OMI observership program.

The Open Medical Institute, the Medical University of Vienna, and the Josephinum Museum organized the gala to promote and celebrate the past, present, and future of "Wiener Schule der Medizin", which was the leading medical institution in 1900. Proceeds from the evening are used to fund joint programs.

- 1 Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD, Shahrokh F. Shariat, MD, and Markus Müller, MD
- 2 Christiane and Wilfred Druml, MD
- 3 Petra Kohlberger, MD and Udo Lozinsek



# GOVERNANCE

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/  
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The American Austrian Foundation (AAF), Inc. is a U.S. non-profit, non-governmental organization established in 1984 to enhance the relationship between the United States and Austria through exchanges in medicine, culture, and the arts. The AAF has grown from a bilateral initiative to a multi-lateral, international institution partnering with non-governmental organizations, governments, and individuals. The organization's budget is drawn from public and private sources. The AAF's board consists of committed individuals from business, law, medicine, and public service.

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The OMI Governing Board oversees the OMI's management and plans its strategic and future growth. The OMI board members include physicians from the program's academic partners as well as healthcare experts and donors. The OMI Steering Committee consists of OMI course directors and is responsible for the academic development of the program.

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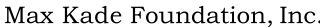


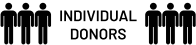
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OMI ACADEMIC PARTNERS

OMI FUNDING

# OMI FINANCIAL REPORT 2021

## OMI SEMINARS SALZBURG STIFTUNG DER AAF

Income	
Donations & Grants	1,700,866 USD
Public Subsidies	1,236,000 USD
Other Income	96,490 USD
<b>Total OMI Seminars Income</b>	<b>3,033,356 USD</b>
Expenses	
Overhead & Staff	456,480 USD
Seminar Expenses (Faculty & Fellows)	1,817,408 USD
Administrative Expenditure	256,820 USD
<b>Total OMI Seminars Expenses</b>	<b>2,530,708 USD</b>

## OMI OBSERVERSHIPS & CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE VEREIN DER FREUNDE DER AAF

Income	
Donation & Grants	448,867 USD
Public Subsidies	12,142 USD
Other Income	146,544 USD
<b>Total OMI Observerships Income</b>	<b>607,553 USD</b>
Expenses	
Overhead & Staff	124,673 USD
Oberservership & Travel Expenses	63,073 USD
Administrative Expenditure	113,331 USD
<b>Total OMI Observerships Expenses</b>	<b>301,077 USD</b>

This financial report represents income and expenses per December 31, 2021 (average exchange rate for 2021: 1 EUR = 1.2 USD). The OMI programs are organized by the American Austrian Foundation (AAF) in cooperation with the Salzburg Stiftung der AAF and the Verein der Freunde der AAF. This financial report does not include the value of faculty time and other in-kind donations.

“Physicians worldwide, regardless of their nationality, strive to do what is best for their patients. The objective of the Open Medical Institute is to help physicians achieve their goals by providing free, state-of-the-art information and education in a neutral, non-threatening environment, which fosters the free exchange of ideas and experiences.”

GEORGE SOROS | OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS



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