



Global Initiative Against
HPV and Cervical Cancer

GIAHC: A Year in Review

November 2016-December 2017

November 2016: Dr. Krishnan was invited by the University of Malaya (Kuala Lumpur) on November 23, 2016 to present on “Prevention through Inspiration and Aspiration: How Can We Screen More Effectively?” This subsequently led to the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two organizations to work together to use modern technologies, such as HPV self-screening and mHealth, to improve cervical cancer screening rates.

December 2016: Dr. Krishnan visited the RUSHA program at the Christian Medical college in Vellore to review the ongoing education, training, screening and early treatment programs.

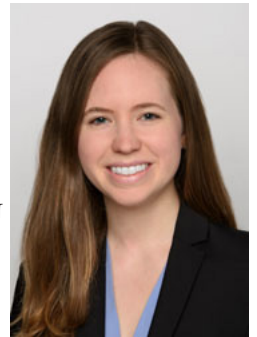


January 2017: In honor of Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, GIAHC and the Aseemkala Initiative presented the voices of cervical cancer survivors in a dance-medicine narrative. A small segment of this dance video created by Shilpa Darivemula of the Aseemkala Initiative was presented at the 2017 International Papillomavirus Conference in Cape Town, South Africa (see more below).

February 2017: GIAHC was invited to organize and present a 60-minute symposium at the International Papillomavirus Conference (IPVS) conference in Cape

Town on “The World Could End Cervical Cancer if it Tried: Sharing Experiences from Community Outreach Programs Around the Globe.” Participants from various programs presented shared their experiences and knowledge on the subject.

March 2017: GIAHC presented its very first award at the American Medical Women’s Association conference (AMWA) in San Francisco. The award was presented to Alice Drain, a medical student from NYU who has demonstrated exemplary interest and creativity in making a positive difference in HPV and cervical cancer prevention.



April 2017: Upon invitation by Pink Ribbon Red Ribbon (an affiliate of the George W. Bush Institute) and the American Cancer Society, GIAHC participated in discussions with members of Congress on Capitol Hill to integrate cervical cancer programs with other global health programs.



Dr. Krishnan stressed that cervical cancer kills millions of young women around the world, leaving behind families with young children. “We can prevent this cancer through tools we have today that are cost effective, safe, simple and work—the HPV vaccine, one-stop screen-and-treat—all for less than US \$40,” she explained. “By investing in cervical cancer prevention, the US govern-

ment will protect its investments in the areas of HIV/AIDS, global health, women's health, maternal-child health, and reap economic benefits, in addition to achieving the first "moonshot" for cancer," she added.

May 2017: Our organization, along with other thought leaders, was invited for a luncheon with Cecile Richards of Planned Parenthood to discuss shared interest in protecting funding for cancer research and access to cancer prevention and treatment services, especially for those who rely on federal programs, like Medicaid.

June-July 2017: We spent considerable time with partners and collaborators evaluating current programs and plans for 2018.

August 2017: GIAHC was the chosen charity by a middle school student for her dance debut in Tuscon, Arizona. The proceeds help GIAHC's Young Leaders' program initiatives.



September 2017: GIAHC and Youth+ Tech+ Health (YTH) signed a MOU to increase the uptake of the HPV vaccination in the US and globally. The two organizations are currently looking for funding to implement and evaluate an innovative digital campaign to educate and empower youth and their adult allies to reduce the burden of HPV-related diseases and cervical cancer.

October 2017: The University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center invited Dr. Krishnan to speak on HPV and cervical cancer prevention in honor of Michele Baldwin (Lady Ganga, daughter of Albuquerque, NM). The talk concluded with the film "Lady Ganga—Nilza's Story," that was screened at the UN on World Cancer Day in 2016.



November-Dec 2017: Dr. Krishnan traveled to India to foster growth of our current partnerships and to develop new ones to work towards cervical cancer prevention.

The Young Leaders Program

The GIAHC Young Leaders program (45 and younger) provides a global platform for youth advocates to network and exchange knowledge regarding HPV and cervical cancer. Training materials and necessary resources are developed in consultation with young leaders to make it culturally sensitive and relevant to the respective geographical areas. Such exercises empower the next generation to play a proactive role in the reduction of HPV-related diseases in both males and females through vaccination, and in addition, to spread the word about screening in the prevention of cervical cancer.



Reid Mergler

My name is Reid Mergler and I am a third-year medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. As an aspiring ob/gyn, I hold women's health issues close to my heart. As the Team Captain of the GIAHC Young Leaders Program, I have worked with some amazing individuals and we have had a productive meaningful year.

First, we have begun an outreach program where medical students and pre-med students use a presentation jointly developed by GIAHC and AMWA to teach pre-teens and

young adults about the importance of HPV vaccination and cervical cancer awareness. One of our members, Cassie Jones, recently gave a presentation in a New York City high school, and students were very involved and interested (see below for her testimonial!). We are also planning to hold awareness sessions for parents in schools in the New York City area in January. Additionally, Shilpa Darivemula (MS4), who is both extremely motivated and talented, has created two artistic awareness campaigns.

The scientific committee updates us with recent research and literature. We also continuously update the Facebook and Twitter pages with new articles to share! Overall, I am very pleased with the growth in our membership and the progress we have made in 2017. I hope for an even more successful 2018!

Young Leaders Program Member Cassie Jones:

“About one week ago, I had the opportunity to meet with a New York City high school to speak with seniors about HPV and cervical cancer. Through my membership with AMWA, I was given the chance to represent GIAHC by leading a workshop dedicated to spreading HPV and cervical cancer awareness. Having worked formerly as a middle school educator, I have witness the many growing pains young adults struggle through as their bodies change and they become more self aware.

Getting back into the classroom to speak about my favorite topic, sexual health, was actualized through the work of GIAHC. After seeking the support of friends, I was connected with the sexual health director of a Queens-based high school. The program she helped establish at this high school is a testament to how far sexual education has come.

Using the content provided by GIAHC as a foundation, I held a workshop for roughly 15 students. We began with identifying cancer and listing words students associated with the disease. Students then moved on to offer words they linked to prevention and eradication. One student offered “can’t” as their word. I took this as an opportunity to expand, and explained how the word can’t can be a dangerous word to use, especially when speaking about medicine, as it can so often limit efforts of prevention and treatment. “Can’t isn’t always applicable,” I responded, “Cervical cancer we actually can stop, and here’s how.” From there we dove into discussion, especially after learning that HPV symptoms are often hard to detect. This discussion lead to a game I developed that better explained how a vaccine actually works.

So often as a teacher I struggled with students forgetting or misinterpreting content. This game was created so that students could walk away understanding what HPV is, how vaccinations work, and why they are necessary in HPV and cancer prevention. The game teaches students how our body builds immunity through vaccines, playing with the idea that post vaccine, our body now supports powerful antibodies that carry with them an unmistakable mugshot of the threatening antigen. For this class, the game was incredibly successful and students walked away asking how they too could help spread the word and teach others how vaccination, especially for HPV is necessary to prevent the spread of HPV and cervical cancer.”