

## ASTMH 2020 Annual Meeting (virtual): Day 1



**MESA Correspondents bring you cutting-edge coverage from the virtual ASTMH 2020 Annual Meeting**

**Day 1: Sunday, 15th November 2020**

### **Opening Plenary Session and Awards Program**

The first virtual ASTMH annual meeting started with around 4000 people registered from over 100 countries on Sunday, November 15th. The conference kicked off with the opening plenary moderated by **Joel G. Breman** (ASTMH President) and a welcome message from **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** (World Health Organization, Switzerland), which was attended by more than 600 viewers. Tedros talked about the importance of commitment and determination in fighting against devastating outbreaks and eradicating deadly diseases. Furthermore, he highlighted the need for people's trust in vaccines for the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The Opening Keynote was given by **Christiana Figueres** (co-founder of Global Optimism) who noted the huge financial infusion that is needed to combat the economic consequences of COVID-19, and raised the idea that depending on how these economic decisions are made, we could change the course of climate change or not. She also talked about the environmental crisis, the greatest risk to human health before COVID-19 and to remain so after it. She mentioned deforestation and pollution as important threats to both human and the planet's health, affecting disproportionately populations living in the tropics. Figueres encouraged global health professionals to use their recognized status reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic to speak up and out in favour of planetary health and to sign the joint letter issued to the International Energy Agency in May 2020.



**2020 ANNUAL MEETING**  
NOVEMBER 15-19 VIRTUAL MEETINGS

ASTMH  
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF TROPICAL MEDICINE & PARASITOLOGY

Opening Keynote Speaker  
**Christiana Figueres**

- Co-Founder, *Global Optimism*
- Co-Host, *Outrage & Optimism*
- Co-Author, *The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis*

Photo by Jimena Mateo

**Anthony Fauci** (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, United States) was awarded for his outstanding service to the global public as a trusted voice in science. He talked about his genesis in times of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and how he became known as a reliable source of scientific information. He further emphasized the need to communicate accurately and honestly in the face of the present pandemic using data-driven evidence.

Afterwards, other prizes were awarded in several different categories such as the Annual Meeting Travel, ASTMH Postdoctoral Fellowship, Young Investigators, Clinical Research, 2020 Fellow of ASTMH (FASTMH), ASTMH Distinguished International Fellows, 2020 Alan J. Magill Fellow and Communications.

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*This report is brought to you by the MESA Correspondents. Senior editorial support has been facilitated by the Organizers and Co-Chairs of the symposia, Valentina Mangano (University of Pisa) and Julie Chaccour (Independent Consultant). This report is cross-posted on the MESA website and on [www.malariaworld.org](http://www.malariaworld.org)*