

20TH ANNUAL

# HUMANITARIAN HEALTH CONFERENCE

EQUIP. CONNECT. GO.

MAY 29-30, 2025  
KANSAS CITY, MO  
[INMEDHHC.COM](http://INMEDHHC.COM)



Humanitarian  
Health Conference

Equip • Connect • Go



# Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Schedule	4
About INMED	5
Sponsors	8
Continuing Education	9
Merch Table Hours	9
Exhibitors	10
2025 Awards	17
Speakers	22
Wifi	29
Maps	34



Equipping Healthcare Professionals  
and Students to Serve the Forgotten.  
[www.inmed.us](http://www.inmed.us)

# Welcome



One-half of the world's population lives on less than five dollars per day. These individuals are frequently forgotten, sick, poor, undereducated, minorities, disabled, elderly, refugees, and victims of war and disaster. Healthcare professionals and students are often highly motivated to serve. However, many feel ill prepared in the face of cross-cultural barriers, unfamiliar diseases and limited resources.

We gather at the 20th annual Humanitarian Health Conference to respond to these who are forgotten and to empower healthcare professionals and students with skills to render encouragement and superb care.

At this event, Equip yourself with skills to better serve. Connect with benevolent colleagues and organizations. Then, create a plan to Go and serve humankind.



Nicholas Comninellis, MD, MPH, DIMPH  
President, Institute for International Medicine



INSTITUTE FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
MEDICINE



# 2025 Humanitarian Health Conference Schedule

EQUIP

CONNECT

GO

## Thursday, May 29, 2025

4:00 - 5:00 pm - Attendee Registration & Visit Exhibits & Posters - *Posters Judging runs 4:00 - 7:30 pm* (Lobby/Exhibit Hall)

5:00 - 5:10 pm - Conference Introduction and Welcome - Nicholas Comninellis, MD (Rm. 250)

5:10 - 5:40 pm - Plenary Session 1 **"Connect"** by Nicholas Comninellis, MD (Rm. 250)

5:40 - 5:50 pm - INMED Awards (Rm. 250)

5:50 - 6:40 pm - Dinner, Visit Exhibits & Posters (Lobby/Exhibit Hall)

6:50 - 7:30 pm - Breakout Session 1

- Rm. 102 **Face Off Against Human Trafficking Part 1** (Linabelle Finnegan, MBA, MIH) - Community Health Track
- Rm. 203 **Implementing a Chronic Disease Management Program** (Jacquelyn Borst, PA-C, MIH) - Patient Care Track
- Rm. 204 **Preparing Yourself for Global Health Work** (James Fyffe, RN) - Career Development Track

7:40 - 8:20 pm - Breakout Session 2

- Rm. 102 **Face Off Against Human Trafficking Part 2** (Linabelle Finnegan, MIH) - Community Health Track
- Rm. 203 **Ethical Concerns with Short-Term Medical Service** (Jacquelyn Borst, PA-C) - Patient Care Track
- Rm. 204 **Taking Your Family Global** (James Fyffe, RN) - Career Development Track

## Friday, May 30, 2025

7:30 - 8:20 am - Breakfast, Registration & Visit Exhibits/Posters (Lobby/Exhibit Hall)

8:30 - 9:00 am - Plenary Session 2 **"Equip"** by Susan Aycock, MD, MIH (Rm. 250)

9:00 - 9:10 am - Who is INMED? (Rm. 250)

9:20 - 10:00 am - Breakout Session 3

- Rm. 102 **HIV Transmission and Infant Feeding** (Diane Petrie, APRN) - Community Health Track
- Rm. 203 **Assessment of the Disabled Child** (Abigail Rattin, MD) - Patient Care Track
- Rm. 204 **Developing Post-Graduate Training in Resource-Limited Settings** (Dennis Palmer, DO) - Career Dev. Track

10:10 - 10:50 am - Breakout Session 4

- Rm. 102 **The Impact of Poverty on Child Health** (Diane Petrie, APRN) - Community Health Track
- Rm. 203 **Clinical Dysphagia Management** (Abigail Rattin, MD) - Patient Care Track
- Rm. 204 **How Fundraising Fuels Mission Hospital Success** (Dennis Palmer, DO) - Career Development Track

10:50 - 11:05 am - Visit Exhibits and Posters (Lobby/Exhibit Hall)

11:05 - 11:45 am - Breakout Session 5

- Rm. 102 **Rethinking Global Health** (Nicholas Comninellis) - Community Health Track
- Rm. 203 **Haiti: Healthcare Crisis** (Ted Higgins, MD) - Patient Care Track
- Rm. 204 **Non-Profit Leadership** (Marc Shaffer, CFP) - Career Development Track

11:55 am - 12:35 pm - Breakout Session 6

- Rm. 102 **Primer on the Top 7 Neglected Tropical Diseases** (Catherine Hoelzer, MPH, PA-C) - Community Health Track
- Rm. 203 **Partnering with Interpreters** (Ryan Northup, MD, Paul Spacek) - Patient Care Track
- Rm. 204 **Fundraising for the Small Non-Profit** (Catherine Hooper and Andrea Lombard) - Career Development Track

12:35 - 1:25 pm - Lunch & Visit Exhibits/Posters (Lobby/Exhibit Hall)

>1:20 pm - Student Scholarship Photo (Meet in lobby by escalators)

1:35 - 3:05 pm - Breakout Session 7 (Hands-On Skills)

- Rm. 202 **Airway Management** (Anthony Kovac, MD, MIH) - Hands On Skills
- Room 203 **Excision of Dermatological Lesions** (Tim Myrick, MD) - Hands On Skills
- Rm. 204 **Cervical Cancer Screening** (Susan Aycock, MD, MIH) - Hands On Skills

3:05 - 3:25 pm - Visit Exhibits and Posters (Lobby/Exhibit Hall)

3:25 - 4:55 pm - Breakout Session 8 (Hands-On Skills)

- Rm. 102 **Vision Solutions in 10 Minutes** (Nizar Mamdani, PhD) - Hands On Skills
- Rm. 203 **Suturing** (Ted Higgins, MD)
- Rm. 204 **Splinting and Casting** (Tim Myrick, MD)

5:05 - 5:15 pm - Poster Awards (Room 250)

5:15 - 5:45 pm - Plenary Session 3 **"Go"** by Gary Morsch, MD (Rm. 250)

5:45 pm - Conclusion of Conference

# About INMED



Equipping Healthcare Professionals and Students to Serve the Forgotten.

The Institute for International Medicine (INMED) exists to equip healthcare professionals & students with the unique skills necessary to effectively serve the world's most forgotten people. INMED is a graduate school offering didactic instruction in the full range of global health topics via online, hybrid, and in-classroom courses, as well as through conferences. We also complement such instruction with supervised service-learning experiences for healthcare students and professionals at INMED Training Sites in low-resource countries.

INMED learners can earn a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma or Master's Degree in International Health.

Contact us at [office@inmed.us](mailto:office@inmed.us) and (816) 444-6400.



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# MIH

## Master's in International Health

This **35-credit hour graduate program** is designed for healthcare professionals and healthcare profession students to lead comprehensive disease intervention and health promotion efforts in low-resource and cross-cultural communities. Three specialty tracks are available: International Medicine, International Nursing, and International Public Health.

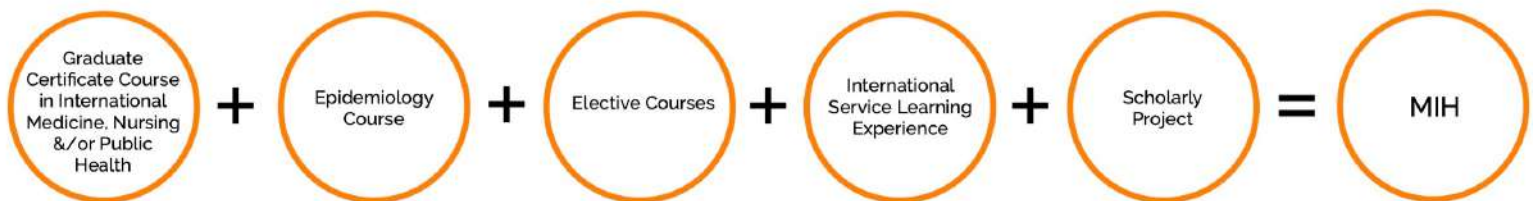
MIH learners acquire advanced academic expertise and field experience in epidemiology, diseases of poverty, maternal newborn health, international public health, cross-cultural skills, disaster management, health leadership, healthcare education, research, and quality improvement.

"INMED has given me insight into what it's like to provide for marginalized communities. I have also learned a lot about issues that have the greatest impact on those communities and how we as health professionals can give back."

- MIH Student

"This has been an amazing program. It has reinforced my desire to work in low resource settings and given me new vision on how to do it well."

- MIH Student



Susan Aycok, MD, MIH

**Time:** Most learners (taking just one course at a time) complete the program in about **2 years**.

Applications are accepted year-round.

Apply today at [www.inmed.us/masters-in-international-health/](http://www.inmed.us/masters-in-international-health/)



# Sponsors

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Charles Sullivan  
Robert Tung  
Larry VanVleet  
Vincent Waite  
Carol Waymack  
Joe Womble  
Julie Wood  
David Zamierowski



# Continuing Education

## Certificate of Completion

A certificate of completion is provided to all participants upon request via the activity evaluation form. It is the responsibility of the individual to submit their certificate of completion and supporting documentation (if applicable) to their required oversight board for credit.

## Accreditation Statement:

### Physicians

Institute for International Medicine is accredited by the Kentucky Medical Association to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Institute for International Medicine designates this live activity for a maximum of 8.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)<sup>™</sup>. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

### Other Healthcare Professionals

A certificate of completion indicating the number of AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)<sup>™</sup> will be issued for completing this course. Certificates may be submitted to applicable state boards for recognition.

# INMED Merch Table

Located at the Lobby Resource Table



### Thursday Hours

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

5:50 pm - 6:50 pm

8:15 pm - 8:45 pm

### Friday Hours

7:30 am - 8:30 am

10:45 am - 11:05 am

12:30 pm - 1:40 pm

3:05 pm - 3:25 pm

5:45 pm - 6:15 pm



# Exhibitors

We are honored to have the following organizations join us as exhibitors at the 2025 Humanitarian Health Conference. Their presence here is vital in connecting passionate individuals with resources and meaningful opportunities to serve where help is most needed. Together, we are equipping and inspiring the next generation of global health leaders. Thank you for being a key part of this mission!

**Crossworld**

**Docs Who Care**

**Fellowship Travel International**

**Floating Doctors**

**GFA World**

**Global Care Force**

**Heart to Heart International**

**Higgins Brothers Surgicenter for Hope**

**Hope Family Care Center**

**INMED**

**International Health Partners, U.S, Inc.**

**Medical Missions Foundation**

**Mercy and Truth Medical Missions**

**Project C.U.R.E.**

**Rural Health Education and Services at the University of Kansas Medical Center**

**Won By One To Jamaica**



# Exhibitors

## Crossworld

<https://crossworld.org>  
[hannah.katz@crossworld.org](mailto:hannah.katz@crossworld.org)



Crossworld is a Christian missions organization of disciple-makers from all professions bringing God's love to life among the least-reached.

## Docs Who Care

[www.docswhocare.com](http://www.docswhocare.com)  
[staff@docswhocare.com](mailto:staff@docswhocare.com)



Docs Who Care has been pairing compassionate providers with rural hospitals in need for the past 30 years. We provide outpatient, hospitalist, and ED coverage primarily in Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Colorado, Washington, and Idaho. We offer a wide range of opportunities for physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

## Fellowship Travel International

<https://fellowship.com/>  
[mreitter@fellowship.com](mailto:mreitter@fellowship.com)



FTI is a full-service travel agency. We believe people should explore the world around them, interact with other cultures & lend a hand when one's needed. We can book airfare, tours, ground services, meals, and/or hotels. We offer a complete 24 hours of service - including an after-hours helpline.

## Floating Doctors

[www.floatingdoctors.com](http://www.floatingdoctors.com)  
[jolie@floatingdoctors.com](mailto:jolie@floatingdoctors.com)



Floating Doctors delivers enduring, adaptive healthcare and development to communities affected by geographic, economic, and social barriers to healthcare, partnering with local communities to tailor services to their needs. Our mission is to reduce the burden of disease in the developing world, and to promote improvements in healthcare delivery worldwide.

# Exhibitors

## GFA

[www.gfa.org](http://www.gfa.org)  
[mikejohnson@gfa.org](mailto:mikejohnson@gfa.org)



Since 1979, we have been committed to serving the “least of these” in Asia and Africa, often in places where no one else is serving, so they can experience the love of God for the first time. GFA supports national workers serving as the hands and feet of Christ.

## Global Care Force

<https://globalcareforce.org/>  
[brenda@globalcareforce.org](mailto:brenda@globalcareforce.org)



Global Care Force is a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming lives through volunteer service, connecting people with opportunities to share their time, talent, and resources to provide compassionate care with respect for all cultures and faiths. Hundreds of volunteers have served in the United States, Egypt, Mexico, Jordan and Ukraine.

## Heart to Heart International

[www.hearttoheart.org](http://www.hearttoheart.org)  
[A2M@hearttoheart.org](mailto:A2M@hearttoheart.org)



Since 1992, Heart to Heart International has distributed more than \$3.2 billion in humanitarian aid worldwide. Our effective effort to help communities in need is achieved by connecting available aid from our strategic donor partnerships to our network of more than 250 nonprofit partner organizations.

## Higgins Brothers Surgicenter for Hope

[www.higginsbrotherssurgicenter.org](http://www.higginsbrotherssurgicenter.org)  
[info@HigginsBrothersSurgicenter.org](mailto:info@HigginsBrothersSurgicenter.org)



Addressing the critical shortage of surgical facilities and trained surgeons is at the heart of our mission. Through the volunteer efforts of surgeons and others, and by raising financial resources, we're working to develop a long-term solution to ensure surgical and medical resources the people of Haiti.



# All Professions. One Mission.

From Ecuador to Senegal to the Middle East, people all over the world need physical help and spiritual hope. You can offer both. Engage your profession and passions to make disciples among the least-reached.



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[crossworld.org/go](http://crossworld.org/go).



# DOCS

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# Exhibitors

## Hope Family Care Center

<https://hfcckc.org>  
[tkettler@aol.com](mailto:tkettler@aol.com)



Hope Family Care Center (HFCC) is a faith-based family medical practice providing quality primary healthcare in Kansas City, Missouri's east side. All patients are welcome including the uninsured, those with insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare.

## Institute for International Medicine

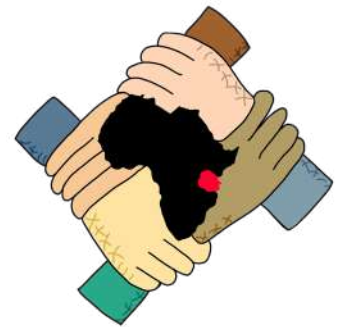
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[office@inmed.us](mailto:office@inmed.us)



The Institute for International Medicine (INMED) exists to equip healthcare professionals & students with the unique skills necessary to effectively serve the world's most forgotten people. INMED is a graduate school offering didactic instruction in the full range of global health topics via online, hybrid, and in-classroom courses, as well as through conferences. We also complement such instruction with supervised service-learning experiences at over 45 INMED Training Sites in 25 low-resource countries. INMED learners can earn a Graduate Certificate, a Graduate Diploma or a Master's Degree in International Health.

## International Health Partners, U.S, Inc.

[www.ihptz.org](http://www.ihptz.org)  
[paula@ihptz.org](mailto:paula@ihptz.org)



International Health Partners, U.S., Inc. has been building health facilities in Tanzania since 2002. Chihoni Medical Center is our fourth hospital project. We host volunteers, medical or non-medical from April through September, anyone over age 5 and no required length-of-stay. Please contact [Paula@ihptz.org](mailto:Paula@ihptz.org) for more information.

## Medical Missions Foundation

[www.medicalmissionsfoundation.org](http://www.medicalmissionsfoundation.org)  
[dan@medicalmissionsfoundation.org](mailto:dan@medicalmissionsfoundation.org)



Medical Missions Foundation brings together compassionate teams of doctors, nurses, and non-medical volunteers to deliver critical medical care to underserved communities worldwide. Since 1996, we've transformed lives by performing over 70,000 surgeries during more than 120 medical missions.



# Exhibitors

## Mercy and Truth

[www.mercyandtruth.com](http://www.mercyandtruth.com)  
[cynthia.moore@mercyandtruth.com](mailto:cynthia.moore@mercyandtruth.com)



Mercy & Truth Medical Missions has been sending teams consisting of volunteers (medical and non-medical) since 1995. These volunteers provide health clinics and education in developing countries that lack adequate medical provision. Teams seek to work in collaboration with indigenous medical professionals in addition to local churches and organizations when possible.

## Project C.U.R.E.

[www.projectcure.org](http://www.projectcure.org)  
[isabellewoodrum@projectcure.org](mailto:isabellewoodrum@projectcure.org)



Project C.U.R.E delivers life-saving medical equipment, supplies and services to meet the needs of people in poverty, disasters and violence around the world.

## Rural Health Education and Services at the University of Kansas Medical Center

[ruralhealth.kumc.edu](http://ruralhealth.kumc.edu)  
[erehmert@kumc.edu](mailto:erehmert@kumc.edu)



The Kansas Recruitment and Retention Center (KRRC) partners with hospitals, private physician practices, community health centers, and other organizations to help strengthen the health care workforce in communities across the State. KRRC services are designed to assist Kansas communities in recruiting and retaining health care professionals.

## Won By One to Jamaica

[wonbyonetojamaica.com](http://wonbyonetojamaica.com)  
[Beth@wbotj.com](mailto:Beth@wbotj.com)



Won By One To Jamaica, a faith-based nonprofit rooted in rural Jamaica empowers lives through its Medical Initiative. This program provides ongoing curative care clinics and offers short-term medical mission opportunities, delivers preventative health education, and offers dental services, addressing critical healthcare needs in an under-resourced community.

# Stress-free Planning: Flights &/or Ground Services

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Our 30+ private humanitarian airfare contracts offer:

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♥ Providing Free Acute & Preventative Health Care Services

Floating Doctors delivers free, high-quality medical care to some of the most remote and underserved areas in Panama—Protecting the **Ngäbe-Buglé indigenous communities of the Bocas del Toro archipelago**. With the dedication of our volunteer healthcare professionals, we offer both acute medical treatment and preventative care, ensuring that patients not only receive help in times of illness, but also have the knowledge and resources needed to maintain long-term health.

#### Why It's Worth It:

- Make a direct impact on underserved populations
- Gain real-world global health experience in a dynamic environment
- Develop cultural humility, adaptability, and teamwork skills
- Be part of a mission-driven community that cares deeply about equity and access

"Floating Doctors gave me the chance to learn medicine in a way no classroom could—side by side with people making real change every day."  
— Volunteer, Medical Student

In the isolated communities of Bocas del Toro, getting to a doctor can mean a journey of hours—or not happening at all. For many families, healthcare simply isn't an option. That's why Floating Doctors brings the care to them—one village, one patient, one boat ride at a time.



#### Medical Volunteer Opportunities Abroad

Volunteering with Floating Doctors is more than just giving back—it's a profound learning experience for medical professionals and students alike. We offer rare clinical training in a setting where providers see a high volume of patients and a wide range of medical conditions not commonly encountered in more developed settings.

Our goal is that volunteers return home with not only sharper clinical skills, but also a deeper sense of humanitarian purpose. Many go on to:

- Incorporate public health values and cultural awareness into their own practices
- Pursue international medical work or global health careers
- Bring holistic, patient-centered approaches to their local communities

"This experience didn't just make me a better provider—it reminded me why I went into medicine in the first place."  
— Floating Doctors Volunteer

**Get in  
Touch**

www.floatingdoctors.com  
1-623-910-7448  
volunteerinfo@floatingdoctors.com



# Awards

Professionals who serve forgotten people inspire their colleagues toward similar service. INMED is pleased to celebrate this tradition by announcing the recipients of the 2025 INMED Awards.

## ***INMED Comninellis Award for Compassionate Service to Humanity***



**Nizar Mamdani, PhD**

Nizar Mamdani, PhD, grew up in Tanzania, East Africa, and received his undergraduate and graduate education in Tokyo, Japan. For twenty years he served as the Executive Director of International Healthcare at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). Dr. Mamdani states, "During my extensive travels around the world I developed a profound understanding of the challenges faced by many individuals who have poor eyesight and who have no hope of accessing clear vision. I observed an acute need for affordable, easily accessible corrective eye care solutions." Nizar and his wife, Marsha Davidson-Mamdani, PhD, founded First Sight, a philanthropic organization established to provide free, low-tech, fool-proof, clinically tested, and affordable vision screening and prescription eyeglasses to children and adults in developing countries. Over 139,000 eyeglasses have been distributed by First Sight and its associates to children and adults in 31 countries. First Sight works with Rotary and Lions Clubs, as well as, with many educational, healthcare, NGOs, and faith-based organizations, and continues to make a much-needed positive impact in the lives of its recipients.

## ***INMED International Medicine Award***



**Susan Aycock, MD**

Dr. Aycock started her career as a full-spectrum family physician in rural eastern North Carolina. Her residency prepared her for a concentration in women's health to include obstetrics. After twenty-five years of full-time patient care, Dr. Aycock went to the local health department where she served in family planning and cervical cancer screening. This career move also allowed her to pursue her interest in world missions. As part of her preparation, Susan earned the Master's Degree in International Health (MIH) through INMED. The service component of the program took her to Roatan, Honduras, where she discovered that cervical cancer screening was prohibitively expensive. Dr. Aycock developed a cost-effective protocol to screen and manage cervical cancer on the island -- one that continues to be used today. Dr. Aycock states, "I have resolved to develop a tool to win this battle in the service of women worldwide."



# Awards

## ***INMED National Healthcare Service Award***



**Pedro Espinoza**

Pedro Espinoza is a TED speaker, entrepreneur, AI investor, and author dedicated to driving innovation and inclusion. His books include *Differences That Make a Difference*, and *The Real ROI: Return on Inclusion*. Pedro is also the Founder and CEO of Pan Peru USA, a nonprofit that focuses on empowering women entrepreneurs in Peru. Founded in 2018, the program has grown from empowering 1 woman to a total of 75 female entrepreneurs in Pampas Grande, a remote Andean village at 12,600 feet above sea level. Today, these 75 women use their knitting and crochet skills to build their own businesses, crafting 100% handmade alpaca apparel for the global market. All proceeds from sales go directly to these women, providing them with economic independence and sustainable livelihoods. Believing that education is the best tool in the fight against poverty, Pan Peru also improves academics for children in disadvantaged communities by building libraries and computer labs.

## ***INMED Cross-Cultural Healthcare Service Award***



**Linabelle Finnegan, MA, MBA, Mmin, DMin, MIH**

Linabelle grew up in a poverty-stricken community in the Philippines and witnessed first-hand the devastation when healthcare was not easily accessible. Because of this, she planned on studying medicine but “man makes the plans, but God directs his steps”. Linabelle’s original education was in business and ministry, and in 2024 she also earned the INMED Master’s Degree in International Health (MIH), with her scholarly project on Building Self-Sustainable Community to Reduce Poverty and to Fight Human Trafficking. Linabelle is especially interested in community outreach, healthcare planning, infectious disease prevention, and solutions to pressing issues related to global disease breakouts, poverty-related health problems, and the growing population of sexually trafficked children. Locally, Linabelle is actively involved in supporting missions for trafficked children in Mountain Grove, MO, and a home for trafficked pregnant teens in Lee’s Summit, MO, and similar work for her community in the Philippines.

# Awards

## ***INMED International Healthcare Preceptor Award***



**Safia Ahmed, BScN, MPH, IBCLC, CDE, RN**

Safia Ahmed is a public health nurse with over 20 years of experience leading and delivering health services to refugees, newcomer immigrants, and residents in low-income neighborhoods in Toronto. Her particular emphasis has been on strengthening health systems, especially those aimed at maternal and child health with attention to breast-feeding and infant nutrition. In 2023 she earned the INMED Graduate Certificate in International Nursing and Public Health, as well as professional qualifications in Helping Babies Breathe, Helping Mothers Survive, and Essential Care for Every Newborn. Since that time, Safia Ahmed has continued to actively teach these subjects in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, as well as here at the Humanitarian Health Conference pre-conference courses. Safia states, "Through INMED, I have gained a wealth of knowledge and added many new tools to my toolbox. More than the courses, I have found a supportive family of like-minded individuals at INMED. The community and the quality of education have been truly exceptional."

## ***INMED Humanitarian Crisis Response Award***



**Jacquelyn Borst, PA-C, DMSc, MIH**

Dr. Jacquelyn Borst has been a physician assistant since 2006, serving in hospital medicine, gastroenterology, and urgent care. In 2020, she completed her Doctor of Medical Science from the University of Lynchburg, and in 2023, she graduated from INMED with the Master's in International Health (MIH) where her scholarly project was on creating a Refugee and Immigrant Healthcare course curriculum for her nurse practitioner students at the Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania PA Program. Today, Dr. Borst is the Executive Director of the International Impact through Medicine Foundation - a nonprofit that supports medical projects in Haiti and Honduras. The foundation focuses on providing service opportunities for PAs. In her leadership role, Dr. Borst has led over forty short-term medical service teams to Haiti and Honduras in the last fifteen years, often bringing PA students and providing an inspiring opportunity for these learners to see a vision of service to the world's most vulnerable people.



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(913) 489-7500  
[info@globalcareforce.org](mailto:info@globalcareforce.org)

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**Meet our team**



Katie, Ellie, Ashley and Natalie

The University of Kansas Medical Center



# Improving Access to Health

Heart to Heart International works to increase health access domestically and globally by delivering medications, direct care, and medical and hygiene supplies.

Learn more at [hearttoheart.org](http://hearttoheart.org).

## Making an Impact:

- Disaster Response
- Access to Medicine
- Hygiene Kits
- Community Health
- Laboratory Programs
- Global Health



**Homestead Country Club**  
4100 Homestead Ct,  
Prairie Village, KS 66208

The Higgins Brothers Surgicenter for Hope (HBSH) provides medical, surgical, and emergency/trauma care to people who live in the rural region surrounding Fonds Parisien, Haiti. Opened in December 2016 and expanded in 2022, the fully staffed facility is the only surgical facility/ER running 24/7 in this region of Haiti. In January 2020, the HBSH assumed management of the Christ for All Hospital that includes hospital care for medical and pediatric patients. The Shawn C. Warren Medical Building houses an array of medical, pediatric, HIV, and dental clinics. Currently the Maternity Center is being replaced. As part of its mission, the HBSH also provides training for Haitian surgical residents. Despite Haiti's challenges-increasing gang violence, lack of stable government, natural disasters, political unrest, and extreme poverty, the surgicenter campus' dedicated team continues to meet the needs of patients.

**For more information about HBSH, the Hit for Haiti fundraiser or to make a donation:**  
**[www.higginsbrotherssurgicenter.org](http://www.higginsbrotherssurgicenter.org)**

# Speakers

It is with great honor and gratitude that we introduce our distinguished speakers at the 2025 Humanitarian Health Conference. Each speaker brings a wealth of experience, knowledge, and a profound commitment to humanitarian service. Their work has not only advanced global health but also continues to inspire others to go and do likewise.



## **Susan Aycock, MD**

Dr. Aycock started her career as a full-spectrum family practitioner in rural eastern North Carolina. Her residency track prepared her for a concentration in women's health to include obstetrics and colposcopy. After twenty-five years of full-time work Dr. Aycock went to the local health department working two days per week in family planning and running the colposcopy clinic. This freedom allowed her to pursue her interest in world missions. As part of her preparation, Susan earned the Diploma in International Medicine and Public Health (DIMPH) through INMED. The service component of the DIMPH Program took her to Roatan, Honduras where she explored a women's health program. When she asked about cervical evaluations, she discovered the cost equated to a month of income for a family, so it rarely happened. Encouraged by a clinic manager to "come up with a protocol" for cost-effective treatment, Dr. Aycock has pursued this endeavor. In the meantime, the WHO resolved to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem. Dr. Aycock states, "I have resolved to develop a tool to win this battle in the service of women worldwide."



## **Jacquelyn Borst, PA-C, DMSc, MIH**

Dr. Jacquelyn Borst graduated from the DeSales University PA Program in 2006. She has practiced in various areas of medicine, including hospital medicine, gastroenterology, and urgent care. In 2020, she completed her DMSc from the University of Lynchburg, and in 2023, she finished her Master's in International Health from the Institute for International Medicine. Dr. Borst is the executive director of the International Impact through Medicine Foundation, a nonprofit that supports medical projects in Haiti and Honduras. The foundation focuses on providing service opportunities for PAs. In her role, she has led over forty short-term medical service trips to Haiti and Honduras in the last fifteen years, often bringing PA students with her. In 2018, she joined the faculty of the Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania PA Program. In 2022, she became the PA Program Director, a position she continues in today.



# Speakers



## **Nicholas Comninellis, MD, MPH, DIMPH**

Nicholas Comninellis is President and Professor of INMED, the Institute for International Medicine. He is also part-time faculty at Research Medical Center Family Medicine Residency. Over a two-year period Dr. Comninellis served inner-city citizens at Shanghai Charity Hospital. Over another two years, he led a healthcare ministry in the war-besieged nation of Angola in southern Africa. Dr. Comninellis next served for six years in the Kansas City public hospital before launching INMED in 2003.

He graduated from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School of Medicine and Saint Louis University School of Public Health and was a family medicine resident at John Peter Smith Hospital. Dr. Comninellis also earned a professional diploma in tropical medicine from the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and became board certified in both public health and family medicine. Among his authored books are Shanghai Doctor, Where Do I Go From Here, and INMED International Medicine & Public Health. Dr. Comninellis is a classical guitarist and faculty co-advisor for UMKC Cru. He was recognized as the 2009 United Nations Association of the United States World Citizen and the 2015 University of Missouri-Kansas City Alumni of the Year.



## **Linabelle Finnegan, MA, MBA, Mmin, DMin, MIH**

Linabelle grew up in a poverty-stricken community in the Philippines and witnessed firsthand the devastation when healthcare was not easily accessible. Because of this, she planned on studying medicine but “man makes the plans, but God directs his steps”. Linabelle’s education and training in business, ministry, and international health have provided a well-rounded collection of knowledge and experiences that have benefited her work in a non-clinical capacity. Linabelle is especially interested in community outreach, education, healthcare planning, infectious disease management and prevention, and solutions to pressing issues related to global disease breakouts, poverty-related health problems, and the growing population of sexually trafficked children, men and women. Locally, Linabelle is actively involved in supporting missions for trafficked children in Mountain Grove, MO, and a home for trafficked pregnant teens in Lee’s Summit, MO. Linabelle has traveled extensively on church mission trips, as well as for international gymnastics meets for her girls as members of the USA and Philippine National Teams.

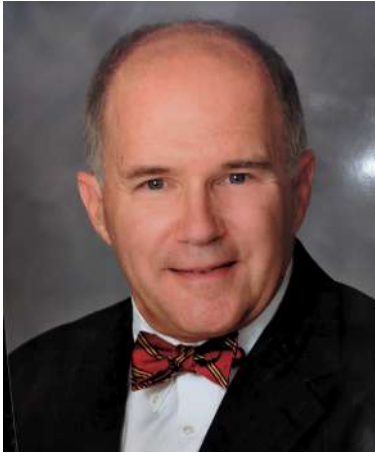


## **James Fyffe, RN, MSN**

James Fyffe began his career as a youth pastor in El Salvador, later serving in nursing at Saint Luke’s Hospital and North Kansas City Hospital. In 2015, James moved his family to central Asia where he taught nursing for 4 years.



# Speakers



**Ted Higgins, MD, FACS**

Dr Edward (Ted) Higgins, MD is a retired vascular surgeon from Kansas City who has built a hospital in a rural area of Haiti to help train Haitian surgeons as well as care for Haitian patients. After initially working in Haiti as a required rotation of his surgical residency at Yale, he continued his mission work teaching Dominican Republic surgeons for 20 years after establishing his vascular and general surgery practice in Kansas City.

Following the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Dr Higgins dedicated his mission work to operating and teaching Haitian surgical residents in Haiti. To accommodate the surgical needs the Higgins Brothers Surgicenter for Hope was built in 2016 and a full Haitian surgical staff providing 24/7 care was begun in 2018. Two years later a failing medical clinic run by clergy was reorganized and incorporated into the Surgicenter. The clinic is now the only functioning medical facility in the region of Haiti and cares for 1500 patients monthly.



**Catherine Hoelzer, MPH, PA-C**

Catherine Hoelzer, MPH, PA-C, has served in global medical ministry since 1992, working in conflict zones like Iraq, Sudan, and Afghanistan. With expertise in international health and development, she has led health programs for underserved communities, trained health workers, and spoken at medical conferences including CMDE, AAPA, INMED, and GMHC.



**Catherine Hooper, GPC**

Catherine Hooper, GPC, has written grants since 2008, working as an in-agency grant manager and consultant. Specializing in health and human services, she's secured over \$100 million in funding. An "accidental grant writer," Catherine's career was shaped by mentors and her passion for nonprofit strategy and capacity building.

# Speakers



## **Anthony Kovac, MD, MIH**

Anthony L. Kovac, MD is a Professor in the Departments of Anesthesiology and Nurse Anesthesia Education and an Affiliate Professor in the Department of History and Philosophy of Medicine at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) in Kansas City, Kansas, USA. He has been on staff at KUMC since 1981.



## **Andrea Lombard, GPC**

Andrea Lombard, GPC, is a nonprofit leader with 15+ years of experience in fundraising strategy, grant writing, and agile project management. A Registered Scrum Master and Michigan State University alum, she has led successful initiatives across health care, education, local government, and social services, supporting mission-driven work through strategic funding.



## **Nizar Mamdani, PhD**

Nizar Mamdani grew up in Tanzania, East Africa, and received his undergraduate and graduate education in Tokyo, Japan. He has served as the Executive Director of International Healthcare at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). After almost 20 years of service at UNMC, Nizar recently retired. He speaks seven languages and has traveled extensively in Asia, Africa, Central and South America, and the Middle East.

Nizar and his wife, Marsha Davidson-Mamdani, PhD, are also the founders and the CEO of First Sight, a philanthropic organization established to provide free, low-tech, fool-proof, clinically tested, and affordable vision-screening and prescription eyeglasses to children and adults in developing countries. Over 139,000 eyeglasses have been distributed by First Sight and its associates to children and adults in 18 countries and it is beginning to make a much-needed positive impact in the lives of its recipients. First Sight works with Rotary and Lions Clubs as well as with many educational, healthcare, NGOs, and faith-based organizations.

# Speakers



**Gary Morsch, MD**

"Would serving people in serious need help to fulfill my life?" is a question frequently posed to Gary Morsch. He replies, "People really do want to help one another, but they often don't know how to do it." Dr. Morsch has invested his entire life in assisting people to discover just how. In 1993 he organized the first Physicians With Heart airlift of goodwill medical supplies to the new Russian Federation. Heart to Heart International grew out of that initiative to become one of today's leading global humanitarian organizations, providing disaster assistance, healthcare supplies, and primary medical care in Haiti, Nepal, and the United States. Today, Dr. Morsch leads Global Care Force, providing pathways for healthcare volunteers to serve in the world's most precarious communities.



**Tim Myrick, MD**

Dr. Timothy Myrick lived and served for two decades with his family in the Muslim world, including sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, the Middle East, and the Horn of Africa - including INMED Training Sites Kanad Hospital and Kijabe Hospital. His wife, Lori, has served as a labor and delivery nurse alongside him. While in Kenya, they focused on the needs of Somali refugees. Dr. Myrick communicates fluently in Arabic and French, has taught medical school in northern Somalia, and is currently teaching family medicine at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.



**Ryan Northup, MD**

Dr. Ryan Northup is a board-certified pediatrician at Children's Mercy Kansas City. He is a Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and serves as Director for Global Health at Children's Mercy. Clinically, he specializes in working with Spanish-speaking families at Children's Mercy's Clínica Hispana de Cuidados de Salud (CHiCoS) where he also serves as Medical Director of the resident clinic and Continuity Clinic Director for the pediatric residency program. He frequently advocates for improvements in health services for global populations as well as advocating for best practices in community health and engagement. He completed medical school at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and his pediatric residency at Children's Mercy Hospital.



# Speakers



**Dennis Palmer, DO**

Dr. Palmer is an Internist with over 40 years of experience working in mission hospitals in Cameroon, Africa. His interests include appropriate medical technology in low-resource settings and medical education especially post-graduate training for African physicians.



**Diane Petrie, APRN**

Diane Petrie received her BSN from Cedarville University and MSN from The University of Central Missouri. She has worked as a Family Nurse Practitioner at Children's Mercy Kansas City for the past 10 years including 6 years in the Infectious Diseases Clinic treating patients living with HIV. She is a graduate of the MATEC HIV Clinician Scholars Program which she completed while working in HIV Primary Care at the KC CARE Health Center in Kansas City. She is certified in HIV Medicine through the American Academy of HIV Medicine. She has special interests in HIV, travel medicine, global health, refugee care, and care of adolescent sexually transmitted infections. She lives in Raymore, Missouri with her husband of 15 years and her 3 young kids.



**Abigail Rattin, FAAFP**

Dr. Abigail Rattin has served with her family in Uganda since 2011 to strengthen the local church. Professionally, she primarily serves children with disabilities and epilepsy while equipping others to do the same. She is trained in family medicine (Greater Lawrence Family Medicine residency) and public health (UMass).

# Speakers



**Marc Shaffer**

Marc Shaffer, CFP®, AIF®, EA, helps families achieve financial continuity and life goals through strategic planning. A nonprofit board leader and community advocate, Marc supports education, philanthropy, and mentorship. He's an avid adventurer, devoted husband and father, and recognized speaker honored as a KState Alumni Fellow and "40 Under 40."



**Paul Spacek, MS, CCHI**

Paul Spacek is the Education and Development Program Manager for Language and Accessibility Services at Children's Mercy Hospital, where he has worked for 11 years. In his role, Paul serves as a coach, mentor, and instructor for interpreting students and new hires, and is also involved in the development and presentation of continuing education classes and community outreach. Additionally, he designs and presents educational materials for the hospital system about how to work with interpreters and provide better care to Limited English Proficient families. Paul is a nationally certified Medical Interpreter through the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreting, holds a Bachelor's degree in Spanish from the University of Kansas, a certificate in Medical Interpretation from Johnson County Community College, and a Master's degree in Adult Learning and Leadership from Kansas State University. Paul has presented previously at Medical Interpreter Conferences including, MICATA, NATI, and CCHI.



**Calvin Wilson, MD**

Dr. Wilson has been involved in global community and family medicine development projects for over 20 years. He developed the first university-affiliated family medicine program in Ecuador, while at the same time directing a community health development project in northern Ecuador. He served as a training advisor in a USAID project to upgrade the primary health care system in Jordan and initiated the training of the first PHC trainers in post-war Iraq. He was the founding director of the University of Colorado Hospital Family Medicine residency program and consulted with the University of Rwanda in the post-genocide re-development of several postgraduate medical residency programs. He has received several awards in global health, including the STFM Smilkstein Award in International Health, the AAFP Humanitarian of the Year, the WONCA Global Family Doctor of the Month, and the INMED International Healthcare Preceptor of the Year.

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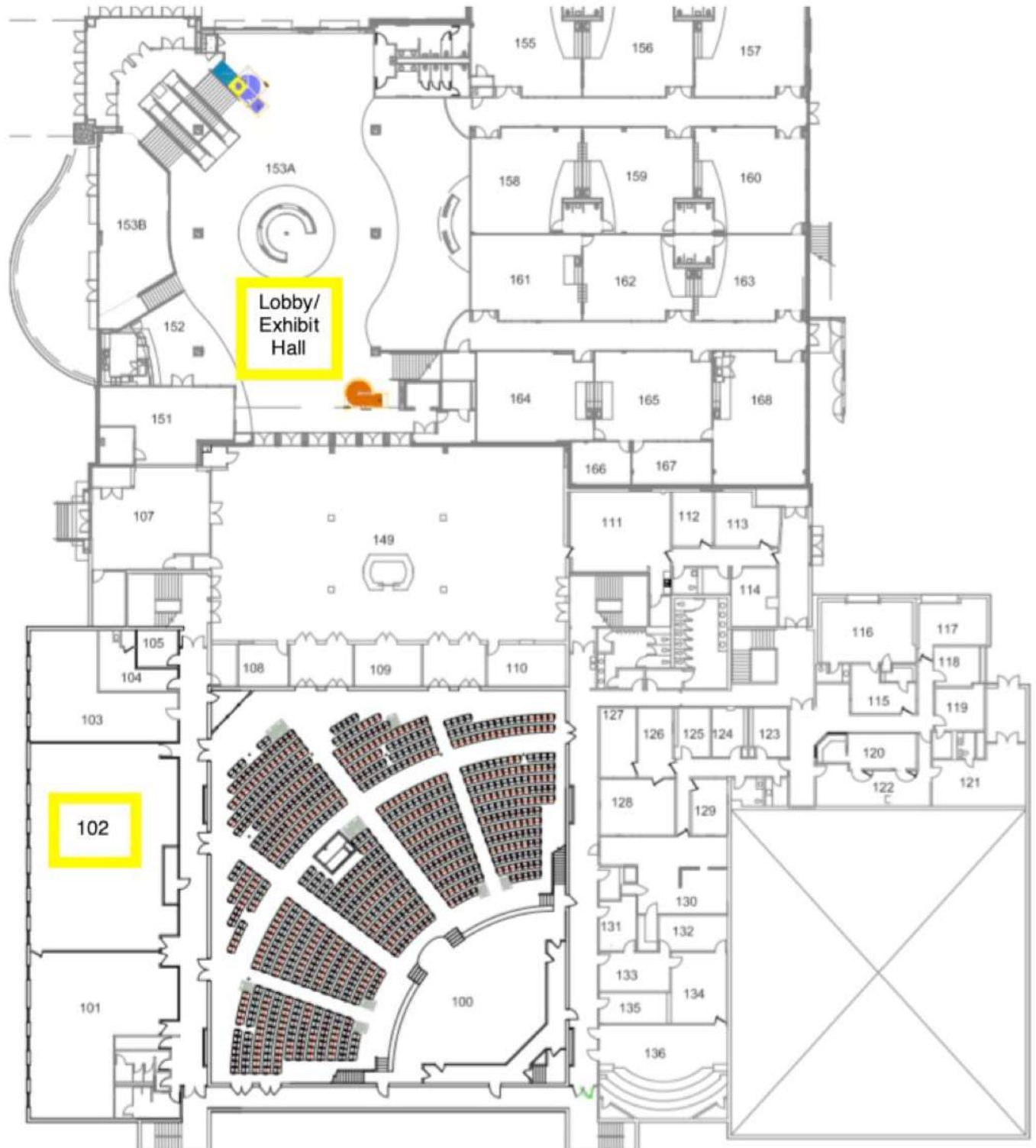
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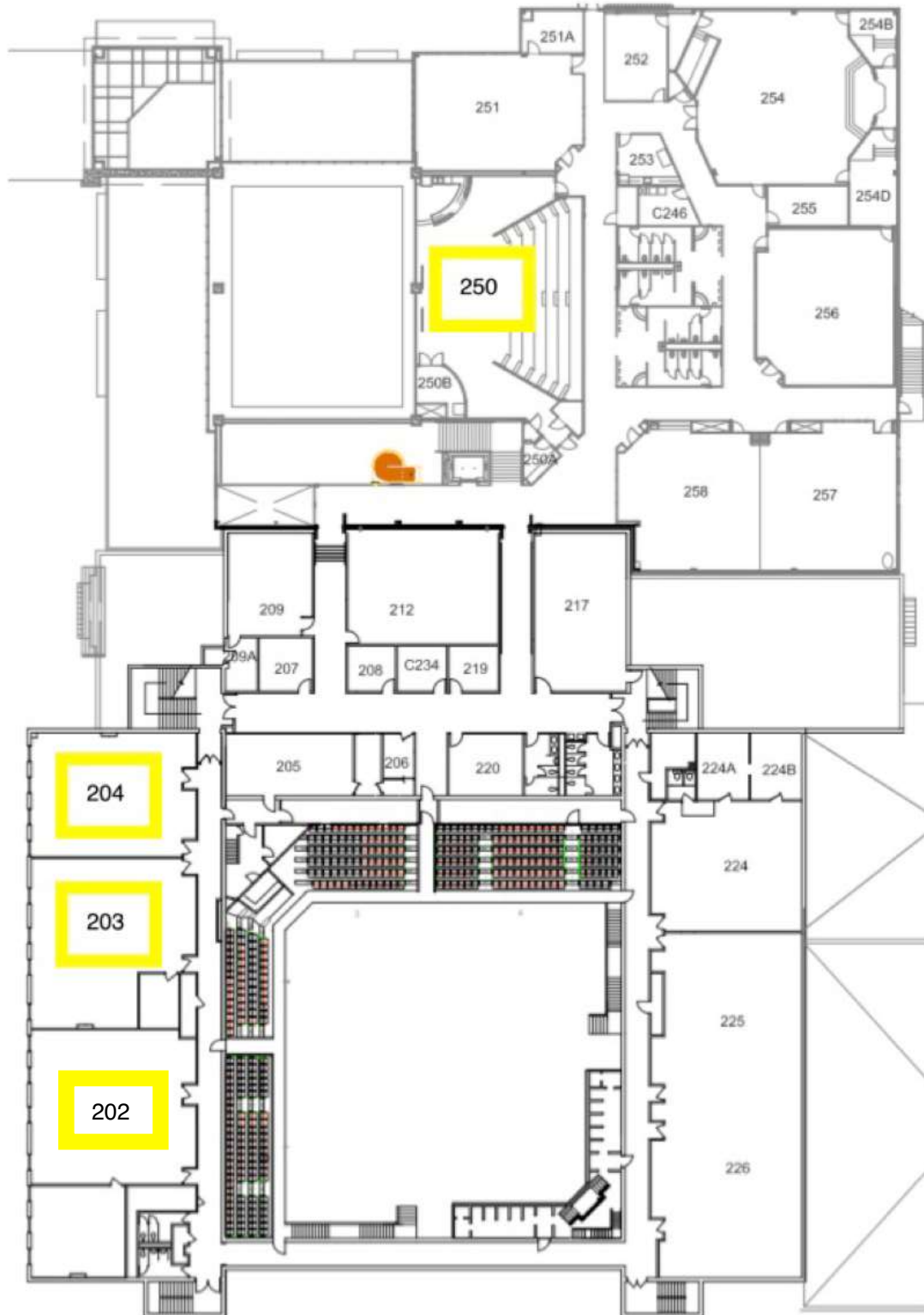
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