January 2024

African interest group, ATS
Co-Chairs:
Daniel Obaseki MD ATSF
Richard van Zyl-Smit MD ATSF

Co-Chairs elected:
Christian Bime MD
Chizalu Ndukwu MD

Interested in respiratory, critical care, and sleep medicine in Africa? Sign up to receive the African Interest Group (AIG) Newsletter, a twice-yearly publication from the ATS that aims to keep you up-to-date and informed on the group’s activities. The AIG aims to facilitate active participation in ATS assemblies, showcase outstanding research through abstract sessions and awards, foster collaboration and networking opportunities, engage the African diaspora, act as a liaison between ATS and thoracic societies in Africa, support mentorship for young researchers, and contribute valuable input to the ATS International Health Committee.

Sign up to receive the AIG Newsletter here!

ATS 2024- SEND IN YOUR ABSTRACTS

ATS 2024 is scheduled to hold in San Diego, California between May 17-22, 2024.

There is still an opportunity to submit abstracts, specifically late breaking abstracts, as the deadline for submission is set for 5 p.m. ET on Wednesday, January 31, 2024.

We are all encouraged to send in abstracts, case reports and plan to participate in this conference.

Click here and don’t miss your chance. San Diego has always been one of ATS's favorite conference venues.

ATS 2024 AIG SYMPOSIUM

Get ready for an exciting and impactful event in 2024! The African Interest Group (AIG) Symposium is set to return during the ATS Conference in San Diego, scheduled for Sunday, May 19. This upcoming symposium promises to be a focal point for professionals dedicated to advancing lung health across the African continent.

Building on the success of the 2023 symposium, where Dr. Christian Bime's inspiring keynotes emphasized the importance of collaboration to advance lung health in Africa, the 2024 symposium will offer a platform for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and networking. It's an opportunity to connect with like-minded colleagues and partners, all working towards a common goal.

Make sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend the 2024 AIG Symposium. Stay tuned for more updates as we get closer to the date. Join us in making a significant impact on the global health future!
INSIGHTS FROM 2023 - THE AIG ADVOCATES FOR PARTNERSHIPS FOR CRITICAL CARE IN AFRICA

The AIG 2023 annual symposium was focused on building up partnerships to advance critical care in Africa. Dr. Christian Bime highlighted the need to shift from a "deficit model" to an "asset model" when addressing critical care challenges.

Dr. Bime shared success stories from various African countries and stressed the importance of partnerships, including the involvement of former French colonies. He advocated for a systems framework approach, involving multiple stakeholders like patients, local institutions, and international partners.

Key strategies included effective communication, stakeholder inclusion, strategic advocacy, patience, publication of high-quality articles, and setting clear objectives with timelines. The AIG's symposium emphasized collaboration, celebrating successes, and fostering partnerships to improve critical care in Africa.

MECOR 2024 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PAN AFRICAN THORACIC SOCIETY

We are thrilled to announce the 2024 edition of the MECOR Africa, organized in collaboration with the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS). This event will take place in Brackenhurst, Kenya, from September 16th to September 20th, 2024.

MECOR (Methods in Epidemiologic, Clinical, and Operations Research) is a pioneering initiative aimed at bolstering lung health across the globe. The PATS MECOR program, one of the oldest courses outside of Latin America, commenced in 2007 with a singular mission: to enhance the understanding of research's pivotal role in medical practice and the acquisition of new knowledge.

MECOR Africa 2024 is designed for clinical and academic physicians, as well as public health professionals across African countries. The program helps participants understand how research informs medical practice and fosters the acquisition of new knowledge.

Click here for more information, and registration deadlines.

MECOR Levels of Training:

**Level 1:** Introduction to research methods, study designs, and protocol development. No prior research experience is necessary.

**Level 2:** Advanced training, focusing on research procedures, statistical analysis, and quality control. Institutional review board approval is required for Level 2 entry.

**Level 3:** Advanced research skills, manuscript writing, and grant proposal development.

**Skills Workshops:** MECOR offers practical workshops in spirometry and air quality monitoring, providing hands-on experience. Equipment loans are available from PATS to support students' research projects.

MECOR Africa 2024 promises a transformative experience. Save the date and join us in Brackenhurst, Kenya, as we work together to enhance lung health across Africa through research and collaboration.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Join us for a series of enlightening scientific sessions at the International Participant Center (IPC) during the ATS 2024 Conference! These sessions promise to be engaging and informative, covering a wide range of topics in the field of pulmonary medicine.

**Sunday, May 19**
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.: Using online tools to increase global research capacity in pediatric pulmonology: The VIPPRA and MECOR experience.
1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.: Dissecting Health Issues in a LMIC for Effective Solutions: the tale of Three Diseases.
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.: African Interest Group Symposium and Networking Session.

**Monday, May 20**
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: Clinical Year in Review (Global Health and Tuberculosis - Location TBD)
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.: Buenos Dias ATS Session: Lung cancer screening in Europe and Latin America: Time to move forward.
1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.: Stop TB Session: There’s Nothing Latent About Latent.

**Tuesday, May 21**
1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.: Respiratory medical devices in low- and middle-income countries needs and how to alleviate the problem.
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.: The New Face of Cystic Fibrosis, a Diverse and Global Disease.

Don't miss these exceptional sessions, where experts will share their insights and research findings, contributing to the...
The ATS AIG congratulates Dr Obianuju Ozoh for her special recognition during ATS 2023 as the recipient of the World Lung Health Award. This award is a testament to the great strides that is being achieved by a new generation of lung health specialists and researchers in Africa.

The World Lung Health Award recognizes contributions to improving world lung health in the area of translational or implementation research, delivery of healthcare, continuing education or care of patients with lung disease, or related political advocacy with a special emphasis on efforts that have the potential to eliminate gender, racial, ethnic, or economic health disparities worldwide.

To nominate a colleague for the 2024 award, please access ATS website.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF AFRICAN INTEREST

There has been a lot of interest in pulmonary function and race adjustments in the last few years and its implications. There have been many publications and arguments about the risk of under recognition and/or over diagnosis of lung disease in minority populations. Below are some of the recent publications about lung research of relevance to African populations:


Schluger, Neil W. “The vanishing rationale for the race adjustment in pulmonary function test interpretation.” American journal of respiratory and critical care medicine 205.6 (2022): 612-614. [Access the publication]

