

# **CUGH2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT**

**April 9-12, 2026**

*Washington, DC*

# CUGH2026: The Future of Global Health



Dear Colleagues,

From April 9–12, 2026, 1,150 global health practitioners from 55 countries gathered in Washington, DC for CUGH2026 to share cutting-edge research, build partnerships, and tackle the most pressing health challenges facing the world today.

The conference featured 39 concurrent sessions, 474 poster presentations, and dynamic plenary sessions. Seventeen percent of the participants came from low- and middle-income countries — a meaningful achievement given today's travel and visa barriers. In an encouraging sign for the field, over a third of all attendees were students, presenting their work and learning alongside seasoned practitioners.

At a moment when global health demands a stronger, more unified voice, CUGH 2026 brought that community together. Researchers, educators, implementers, students, and policymakers connected across borders, the conversations and collaborations that emerged will carry the field forward. We look forward to continuing this work with our members and colleagues throughout the year. We hope to see you at CUGH2027 in Lima, Peru.

With deep gratitude,  
Dr. Keith Martin, *Executive Director*

## With Deep Gratitude to Our Sponsors

### EXECUTIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE



### CHAMPIONS



### ADVOCATES



### SUPPORTERS



Robert J. Havey, MD  
Institute for Global Health  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY FEINBERG SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



### FRIENDS



**SAVE THE DATE**  
CUGH's 18th Annual Conference  
*February 25-28, 2027*



# Hill Day and Pre-Conference

To kick-off the conference weekend, members met with their elected representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss topics ranging from global health and research funding for 2027; support for NIH, Fogarty International Center, and CDC; and vaccine policy and health preparedness. CUGH hosted 12 Pre-Conference Workshops the following day to build skills in AI, effective communication, and navigating shifts in global health education.



Photo of Hill Day attendees in the Rayburn Building (April 8)

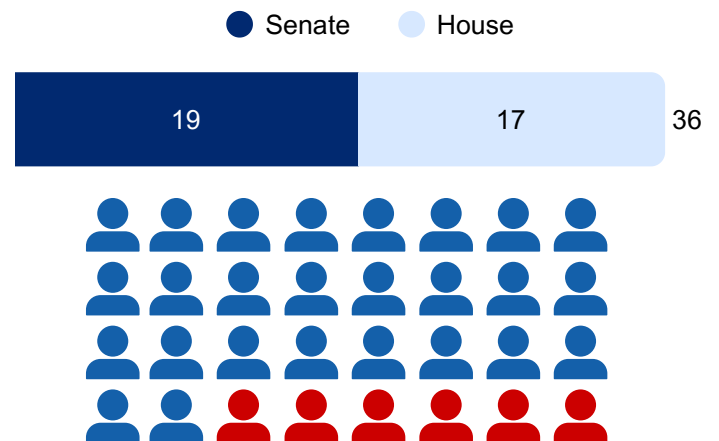
 Attendee remarks about Hill Day via LinkedIn

Did a thing today that I'm maybe most fulfilled by out of (nearly) anything else I've done this year.

Went to "The Hill" for the Consortium of Universities for Global Health "Advocacy Day", a pre-conference event prior to the meeting starting.

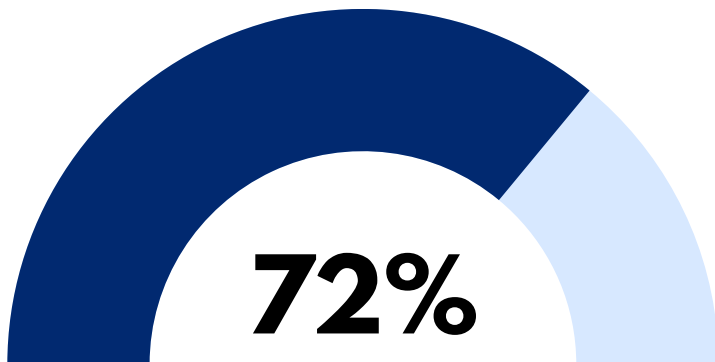
We got to speak to senators and representatives (or their staffers) on #globalhealth, #globalhealthfunding (!), #climate and the #environment, among other key priorities in global health

## Number of Meetings by Congressional Chamber & Political Party



## Top 3 Pre-Conference Sessions:

- 1** Communication Skills that Transform Science into Action
- 2** Building Community-Centered AI & Digital Tools
- 3** Global Health Educators Workshop



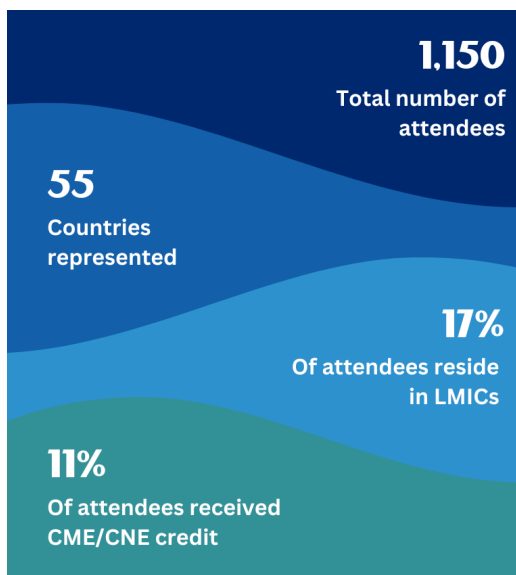
of pre-conference participants claim they are likely to utilize the skills learned in the workshops

“Trust is key between people. Treat communities as partners not victims.”

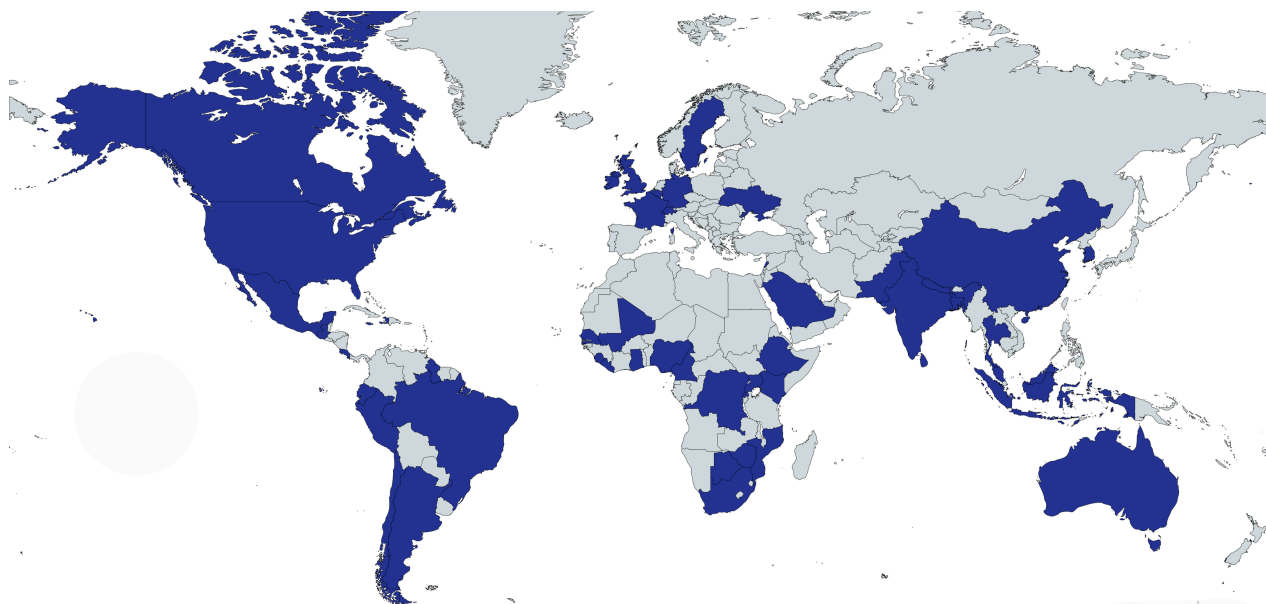
*Pre-Conference attendee reflection on the most important thing learned from the workshops*

# CUGH2026 By the Numbers


CUGH welcomed 1,150 attendees representing 55 countries and 118 member institutions. Notably, 17% of attendees were based in low- and middle-income countries, demonstrating a strong commitment to participation despite ongoing challenges including visa restrictions and increased travel costs. CUGH offers CME/CNE credit and 11% of attendees took advantage of this opportunity. Our participants shared their appreciation of the opportunity to network and engage with peers on current issues affecting global health.

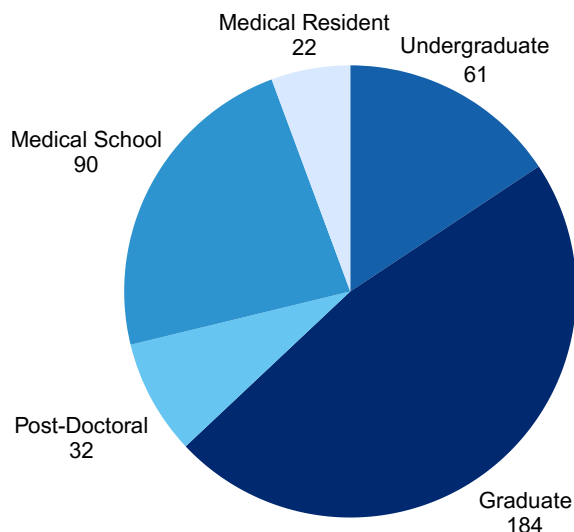


## Geographical Distribution of Attendees



## Student Attendees by Type

  
**34 %**  
of attendees were students



# Keynotes & Plenaries

This year's keynote presentations highlighted the power of storytelling and the importance of building resilient health systems. The plenary sessions underscored these themes and explored high-priority challenges shaping the current global health landscape including financing the future of global health, bridging research and policy, and more. The most popular panels featured discussions about artificial intelligence and reshaping global health systems in the context of reduced funding.

2

Keynotes

8

Plenaries

“

Both keynotes on Friday and Saturday were exceptional. While not an area I focus on, the keynote on Friday was very engaging. On Saturday, Latin America is a region I focus on so I found it particularly relevant to my work. The panelists were also excellent.

*Attendee discusses keynote presentations*



318

**Average Keynote & Plenary Attendance**

## KEY SESSION THEMES

Equity & Independence

Systems & Resilience

Global Uncertainty & Disruption

Knowledge & Evidence

Policy & Governance



*Credit: Robb Cohen Photography & Video*

Dr. Joaquin Barnoya (right) speaking during the keynote discussion about building resilient health systems, moderated by Dr. Patricia Garcia (left).



*Dr. Joaquin Barnoya, Minister of Health Guatemala, via LinkedIn*

I had the honor of participating with Dr. Barbosa, Director of PAHO, in the conference of the Consortium of Universities for Health (#CUGH2026). At this conference, we shared our vision for building health systems that respond to the needs of a world with new challenges.

# Concurrent Sessions & Posters

Attendees had the opportunity to engage with a diverse range of global health topics through concurrent sessions and poster presentations. Concurrent sessions explored AI in global health education, bridging international and domestic research through reciprocal learning, among other topics. Complementing the sessions, the poster presentations highlighted current cutting-edge research, programs, and innovations by students and researchers.



Poster presentations during the conference

39

Concurrent Sessions

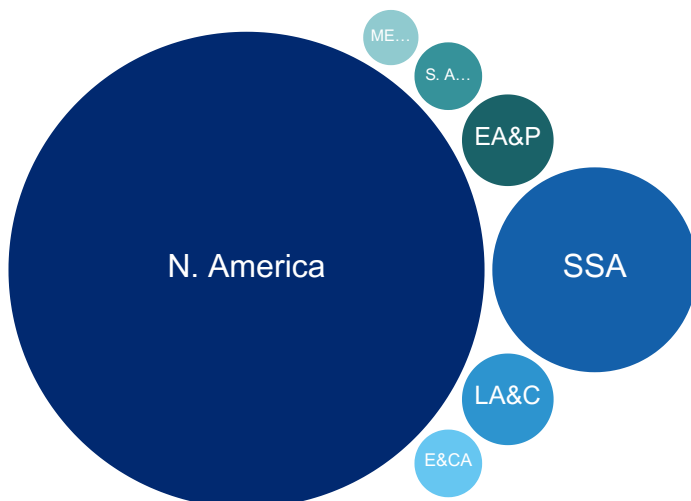
474

Poster Presenters

## THEMES ACROSS SESSIONS



## Poster Presenter Representation by Region



“

Impressed by the range of participants and countries presenting posters, broader than I recall from past years

There was a diverse array of research on display which gave me a feel of the real, honest boots-on-the-ground work that is being done by academics all over the world.

*Attendees discuss poster presentations and sessions*

**Check out our new website!**



*[www.cugh.org](http://www.cugh.org)*



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