



NEWS RELEASE

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2020 Academy of Public Health's Distinguished Fellowship Award Recipients Announced

Abuja — The selection committee of the Academy of Public Health, the flagship body of the West African Institute of Public Health, awards the Distinguished Fellowship, the highest fellowship rank in the Roll of Fellows of the Academy to four eminent persons; Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Dr Akinwumi A. Adesina, Leith Greenslade and Winnie Byanyima.

The quartet for the Distinguished Fellowship of the Academy of Public Health (DFAPH) were nominated by young public health professionals across the African continent for their demonstrated leadership in working towards ensuring equity, better health and wellbeing for all. They have been recognised for their transformational leadership styles that serve as models that inspire emerging young leaders in public health to strive to make difference in their work.

Dr Tedros A. Ghebreyesus of the World Health Organisation (WHO) was specially recognised for his leadership of global public health and moving a COVID-19 response that is equity –focused that leaves no one behind, including his approaches towards eliminating “Vaccine Nationalism” in the face of the pandemic threatening the world.

Dr Akinwumi A. Adesina of the African Development Bank (AfDB) was particularly recognised for his action leadership in quickly moving the AfDB to provide the financial bulwark to the African Union as well as some of its member states to help curb Africa’s COVID-19 pandemic. He was also noted for engendering thought leadership through the AfDB’s institute to shape actions in the COVID and post-COVID era for Africa’s economies and health systems.

Leith Greenslade of JustActions a global campaign to mobilize action around ten initiatives with the power to accelerate progress to a more just world, was recognised for leading a global movement towards bringing childhood pneumonia, the number one killer of children under-five years worldwide to the front burner of global health action by leveraging on the opportunities of public-private and philanthropic partnerships. As part of this, she has advocated for increased access to low-cost medical oxygen.

Winnie Byanyima of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has worked unwaveringly to ensure that the HIV/AIDS programme’s key populations who are among those disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 are not forgotten in the response, especially as more than 25

million people living with HIV were on treatment worldwide and 88% of those on treatment had achieved viral suppression at the dawn of pandemic in 2019.

The Distinguished Fellowship recipients lead the Roll of Fellows for their exceptional leadership and service to humanity in making a difference in the lives of people and inspiring young leaders to also excel in their public health work. The awards committee composed of public health professionals and development experts selected the top four nominated by young professionals in public health across Africa.

“The young public health professionals have chosen these exceptional global leaders for their extraordinary leadership in this very trying period. We are all excited about the outcome, as it is timely, being that today is marked as universal health coverage day”, said Dr. Francis Ohanyido, Director-General of the West African Institute of Public Health.

The Distinguished Fellowship of the Academy of Public Health (with post nominal scripts “DAPH”) was established by the Academy of Public Health in 2016 as a special fellowship Award for outstanding leaders making impact in public health, especially in ways that will positively improve the health systems in Africa and create momentum towards universal health coverage. However, 2020 is the first year of recognizing such awardees for the DFAPH, which is the elite fellowship category with minimum of two and maximum of four selected annually.

The West African Institute of Public Health is the leading regional nonstate health development organisation working in enabling environment, professional training and education, research, standards, consulting and advisory services. The Academy of Public Health of the Institute, is a membership-based body that focuses on building a strong network of highly skilled and competent competent public health practitioners. The Institute is also the keeper of the regional charter of public health.

Award recipients are formally being notified of their awards and date for a virtual investiture. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic recognition luncheons honouring the recipients will be held sometime in 2021. The Honourary and regular Fellowship of the Academy of Public Health (Hon.FAPH & FAPH) list will be released on the 4th of January 2021.